

Eden Girls' Leadership Academy, Manchester

Inspection Report

Local authority: Manchester
Inspected under the auspices of: AMS UK
Inspection dates: 17 January 2024
Lead inspector: Yusuf Seedat

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

Type of school Secondary Comprehensive
School category Academy Free School
Age range of pupils 11-16
Gender of pupils Girls
Number on roll 637
Appropriate authority Board of Trustees
Chair Jawad Amin
Principal Mrs Kulsum Vali

Date of previous school inspection: Not previously inspected.

Address: 40 Rayburn Way, Manchester, M8 8DT

Telephone number: 0161 329 7300

Email address: info@egmanchester.staracademies.org

School website: www.edengirlsmanchester.com

Introduction

Inspection team

Lead Inspector Yusuf M Seedat

Team Inspector Mohammad Asad

This inspection was carried out by 2 inspectors. They visited 7 lessons or parts of lessons including (collective prayers session). They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of children. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including children's written work, teachers' lesson plans, the RE (Islamic Studies) curriculum, the school's self-evaluation documents and the school's Islamic Studies development plan.

The inspection team looked in detail at the following:

- The 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' Leadership Academy, Manchester (EGLAMS'), boasting a current enrolment of 637 pupils with 99.5% of Muslim faith. Plans for a future sixth form provision are in the pipeline. While the academy embraces students of all faiths and none, it is notable for having a higher-than-national-average proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding.

Most of the students at the school come from an Asian or Arab heritage background, and a considerable majority of them are speakers of English as an additional language. Additionally, the school reports an average percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Notably, one student is currently dual enrolled at a local school as part of a managed move.

Inspection judgments

Overall effectiveness	1
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 Leadership Academy is Outstanding because:

The Eden Girls Leadership Academy, Manchester has demonstrated outstanding overall effectiveness and efficiency in the provision of Religious Education (RE). The leadership's commitment in implementing the Star Academies Trust of a distinctive faith ethos and a strong mission statement permeates all aspects of the school's activities. Effective support and monitoring by the Trust ensure that rigorous assessment of teaching methodologies, curriculum delivery, and ongoing professional development for staff.

EGLAMS' leaders are dedicated to ensuring that every pupil receives the very best education, with a particular emphasis on RE. Leadership in RE is robust, fostering a culture of collaboration, continuous improvement, and a commitment to the 'Teach Like A Star' framework from the trust ensures a common understanding of teaching expectations, fostering a culture of excellence among teachers. The RE curriculum is stimulating, rich, and inclusive, providing exceptional learning experiences. It values the Islamic perspective and is complemented by Arabic, Nasheed, art workshops, assemblies, spirituality days, and competitions.

The Star Academies Trust expects all their faith ethos schools to implement the Faithful Stars Framework which this school executes their Exceptional Character Development Programs through Sunnah fast, Seerah workshops, HOW program, Spirituality days, and Quran completion which contributes to well-rounded individuals the school does extremely well.

The Leaders with the effective contribution from the governors are strengthening ties with the local community by promoting awareness of the school's outstanding programs, engaging parents in the learning process, and fostering partnerships with external organizations.

The school has implemented a comprehensive leadership program aimed at providing diverse leadership opportunities to foster the development of character and community engagement. Students take pride in representing the school in various roles such as FCE Ambassadors, Pupil Shura Ambassadors, Library Ambassadors, Sports Leaders, Prefects, Wellbeing Ambassadors, and more. Notably,

For instance, students actively lead and organize a wide range of charity events, which are well-received by the communities served by the school. The school has successfully raised substantial funds for gifts and toys benefiting young patients in local hospitals, hospices, and food shelters. Each year, students contribute tens of thousands of pounds to support local, national, and international charitable causes.

Comprehensive safeguarding measures collectively underscore the school's unwavering commitment to providing a safe and secure environment for all stakeholders. The "Outstanding" rating reflects the school's dedication to continuous improvement and the well-being of its students.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

Despite the challenges presented by the diverse starting points of the students, the school has demonstrated exceptional achievements in GCSE Religious Studies. It is imperative to not only sustain this excellence but also to strive for continuous improvement. The ongoing monitoring and support provided by the Star Academy Trust should be utilized to uphold and enhance these positive outcomes.

Achievement of pupils at the school in their religious education is Outstanding because:

Particularly notable is the excellent achievement and progress observed in Religious Education (RE). The school's GCSE RS results, considering the base starting point of pupils, for the academic years 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 reveal consistently high percentages across various grade categories, showcasing achievements above the National Average.

EGLAMS' key strengths lie in its comprehensive catch-up provision, ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to reach their full potential in public examinations. The RE Schemata, with clearly sequenced and defined knowledge components, coupled with curriculum-related training for all staff, including subject-specific pedagogy, contributes to the outcomes. The school has implemented an enhanced training programme, incorporating lesson visits and coaching to elevate teaching standards.

Noteworthy is the emphasis on skill development, fostering the evaluation abilities of students through activities such as debate, problem-solving, extended writing, and the application of evidence-based arguments. The targeted intervention program further underscores the school's commitment to supporting individual student needs.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

However, for continued improvement, the focus should be on sustaining the strong outcomes in GCSE RS over time. This includes a specific emphasis on targeted support to increase the proportion of pupils achieving Grades 7 and above. This targeted approach ensures that the school remains proactive in addressing areas that may benefit from further enhancement, maintaining its commitment to excellence in religious education.

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

Teaching, assessment, behaviour, and learning in Religious Education (RE) at the school are consistently described as exceptional. This assessment is supported by various evaluation methods, including lesson visits, book scrutiny, pupil feedback, and academic outcomes. The commitment and enjoyment displayed by pupils in RE lessons are notably high, with lessons being characterized as pupil-focused, engaging, paced, challenging, and effectively structured, resulting in significant progress.

Pupil behaviour in school and RE lessons is highlighted as exceptional, with regular assessments contributing to excellent progress. The assessments are conducted after each unit and formally at the end of each term, effectively identifying and addressing gaps in understanding. The school's rigorous quality assurance processes, embedded in the academic calendar, foster a culture of zero tolerance for complacency. These processes are applied across all departments, including RS, creating a supportive yet challenging environment for all staff.

The school employs a comprehensive approach to evaluating the quality of education, utilizing lesson visits, work scrutiny, pupil feedback, data analysis, and both internal and external deep dives. A Teaching Profile is maintained to monitor the standard of teaching and learning in all subject areas, guiding support and interventions for both pupils and teachers.

Instructional coaching, support, and interventions are implemented to enhance the quality of education and improve pupil outcomes. Regular foci from the 'Teach like a Star' handbook, launched through practice clinics and reviewed in all lessons, contribute to ongoing improvement. An external quality assurance visit in May 2023 confirmed the effective implementation of curricula in subjects such as RS, highlighting good consistency in pedagogical approaches and strategies.

The overall observation is that teachers demonstrate high expectations and standards, fostering positive relationships and engagement with pupils. The school's Teaching Profile indicates that teaching within RE is consistently judged to be good or better.

To sustain standards during teacher absences, there is a recommendation to continue developing teaching materials. Additionally, an opportunity is identified to provide a bridging course for pupils interested in studying A-level RS/philosophy and ethics, indicating a forward-looking approach to further academic opportunities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of Religious Education is Outstanding because:

The principal and leadership, as a whole, at the school, encompassing both administrative and governing bodies, including the oversight of Star Academies Trust demonstrates a steadfast commitment to achieving "educational excellence" in delivering a world-class Religious Education (RE) provision. Leaders, at all levels, are dedicated to ensuring the highest levels of achievement and personal development across all curriculum areas, with a particular focus on RE.

RE Leaders exhibit a deep understanding of the pupils, intervening when necessary, and implementing extensive revision and catch-up programs, especially during challenging periods such as the pandemic. The leadership, comprising highly qualified and knowledgeable senior leaders and a committed governing body, instils a sense of purpose aligned with the Faith Character Education (FCE) of the school.

A strong faith-based ethos, emphasizing character development, service to others, and the nurturing of serving British Muslim Citizens, is central to the school's mission. Leaders, including a dedicated faith lead, are passionate and knowledgeable about faith issues. Governors play a crucial role in holding the school accountable, receiving detailed inductions and ongoing training to support their critical oversight function.

The Local Accountability Board (LAB) regularly receives termly reports from senior leaders, encompassing the progress made in Faith and Character Education within the school. Effective communication, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the school's faith ethos are efficiently carried out by governors and leaders. Regular meetings between governors and senior leaders ensure the school stays on course to achieve key priorities and targets, with a focus on ensuring that any received data or quality assurance reports faithfully represent the actual conditions on the ground.

The development of the RE curriculum reflects meticulous planning, focusing on Islam as the key faith while studying other world religions, fostering understanding through shared themes. The pursuit of excellence is evident in sustained high achievements and personal development, supported by rigorous monitoring and evaluation. RE teachers are held accountable through various measures, including weekly lesson visits, work scrutiny, and a thorough Performance Management system.

The RE curriculum positively impacts pupils' behaviour, safety, academic achievement, and their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. Equality of opportunity is actively promoted, resulting in positive outcomes for all pupils. The school's commitment to quality education is further demonstrated through a robust coaching program and continuous professional development for teachers and support staff.

Safeguarding arrangements are deemed outstanding, with dedicated Designated Safeguarding Leads and a rigorous Single Central Record. The External Speakers' and Charity Policy ensures alignment with Trust expectations, emphasizing adherence to Fundamental British Values. The school's commitment to professionalism and excellence in the delivery of RE is consistently modelled by every member of the staff. In summary, the evidence strongly supports the school's self-evaluation, affirming outstanding leadership and management in the realm of Religious Education.

The extent to which the religious education curriculum meets pupils' needs is Outstanding because:

At Eden Girls Leadership Academy Manchester, faith lies at the heart the curriculum. For this reason, Collective Worship is part of the structure of the school day. All pupils pray Zuhr at school in the winter months and have the opportunity to pray Zuhr in the summer months. To help develop pupils further, Salah workshops are offered to pupils for them to become more confident in completing their salah.

The RE lead in school has created an innovative approach to the delivery of the SACRE scheme of work. The scheme has been reworked to put an emphasis on Islam so that, when studying other faiths, the pupils have a wealth of opportunities to discover similarities and differences with their own faith. The Faith provision including collective worship, follows the Star Faith and Character Education Policy and is both inclusive and comprehensive. The 4Cs framework is at the heart of the school's faith offer.

Daily recital (in Arabic and English) of Surah al-Faatihah (Opening Chapter of the Holy Qur'an) at the start of lessons and the Kaffara al-Majlis (prayer) at the end of every lesson is observed. Du'aas in both Arabic and English are displayed around the school environment encouraging pupils and adults to pray before entering, eating, drinking water and using the bathroom. Islamic greetings are exchanged, and other expressions are used throughout school, both within and outside the classroom by staff, pupils and families.

Weekly activities include pupils taking part in interactive Hadeeth of the Week lessons during form time. This is an opportunity for them not only to understand the key message of the Ahadeeth, but to also engage in, be tested upon and encouraged to put them into practice. In addition, on Fridays, pupils listen to a recitation of Surah Kahf, with translation in English, at the beginning of the day, which fosters a calm and reflective start to the school day.

Throughout the school day pupils are reminded of the remembrance of Allah as nasheeds and dhikr are played during transition times via the school tannoy system. A completion of the full Qur'an takes place on Fridays and all pupils are provided with a finger counting device/tasbeeh.

Termly events include Spirituality Days and competitions. Themes for Spirituality Days have included life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Hajj, Salah, Belonging and Identity and keeping healthy during Ramadhaan. The days are highly regarded by all pupils. Termly FCE competitions have included a Seerah Mastermind, Spirited Art and the Spoken Word. These competitions have encouraged pupils to learn about the life of the Prophet (PBUH) and the life of those who were close to him. One student very proudly shared about the Seerah Mastermind, *'It was a brilliant occasion which connected me to my faith. We watched clips on Seerah, and it allowed me to implement Sunnahs in my life and develop my character'*.

Annual events include the Winter Fast Programme, celebrating Hajj, Muharram, Eden's Got Talent and Ramadhan related activities, such as goal setting through a Ramadhan diary, assemblies, and events to mark special occasions in the faith calendar. More recently pupils have taken part in the 'Salwaat Millions Challenge'. Pupils engaged in this with a lot of enthusiasm. Salawaat booklets were produced for the pupils, and they were all given a digital tracker. The

aim was to reach 1 million salawaat in 2 weeks as a whole school collective worship. This has helped to develop and enhance the spirituality and mindfulness of the pupils.

Pupils have also had the unique opportunity twice to take part in a Qiyam organised before and during the month of Ramadhan in 2023 and 2022. This was an opportunity for pupils to feel spiritually uplifted and take part in a set of team-building activities, singing nasheeds as well as collective worship. This again has helped to inspire, build confidence and nurture spiritual growth.

To enhance collective worship within school, during the winter months, the Adhan is played through the tannoy system twice during lunch time, this is to raise the spiritual connections pupils have with salah.

The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is Outstanding because:

The school's mission statement and our 4Cs framework is firmly rooted in spiritual, moral, social and cultural values. Faith learning and personal development programmes make an outstanding contribution to the spiritual, moral, social, cultural development of our school community, including those of other faiths and none. Leaders have a strong sense of moral purpose and pupils show high levels of respect for others. Pupils act to help those less fortunate than themselves and have well developed views on a range of moral issues. Pupils understand the concepts of right and wrong. This is reinforced through the STAR values, assemblies, form time, displays, lessons and extra-curricular activities.

A variety of extra-curricular activities are offered to all pupils in the school. This includes ample Sports Clubs, STEM club, cooking club, nasheed club etc. Pupils have played an active role in participating (and winning) Trust-wide faith competitions, including Spirited Art and Spoken Word competitions. Eden's Got Talent is one of the biggest events of the school calendar where pupils compete in the categories of Nasheed, Speech and Qur'an recitation in front of guests, which in the past has included the Mayor of Manchester, The Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, governors, staff and pupils. Prestigious prizes are awarded to the winners in each category.

There are also ample opportunities for pupils to take on pupil leadership roles in the school. Pupil leadership groups include the year 11 Leadership team, prefects, FCE ambassadors, well-being ambassadors, Reading ambassadors, Librarians, Pupil Shura, Sports leaders. School leaders are pivotal in leading activities in school related to SMSC. Most recently, this has included Spirituality Days and Charity Events. Pupils have had external agencies deliver workshops to help pupils in their understanding and skill of the Islamic arts, through Islamic calligraphy, daff drumming, Quran illumination and geometric tile making.

They learn about, and respect, their own faith and other major faiths through Religious Studies lessons and projects undertaken with young people from other schools and backgrounds.

They explore their character development through 'Citizenship' lessons. All learners study PSHE, to appreciate the tenets of democracy, human rights and how public institutions work.

They participate in, and deliver, assemblies and 'Spirituality Days' regularly to develop their values and ethos.

They undertake a range of interfaith activities – including discreet lessons, interfaith trails and visits by speakers of different faiths. They are taught about similarities and differences between religions through topics of study. For example, in a RS lesson observed, the teacher effectively engaged pupils in a stimulating discussion around the similarities and differences between Islam and Christianity when teaching about 'The oneness of God and the Trinity'.

Languages lessons enhance focus on bringing the country into the classroom so that pupils can appreciate the different cultures linked to the language. The school makes use of authentic resources to ensure that the experience is as close to real life in the country as possible.

The cultural capital of learner is defined by the school as the essential knowledge that pupils need to be educated citizens – studying the best that has been thought and said and helping to engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.

National curriculum lessons are taught with the highlights of contributions made by some of the most consequential Muslims in history and displays around the school reflect on their roles.

In the last academic year, the school has raised over £20,000 for both national and international charities and delivered more than 150 parcels/gifts to needy people in the community. All charitable activities in the school are pupil led with pupils for example competing in form classes to use their enterprising and creativity skills to produce innovative ways to raise funds, pupils coming together as a form to prepare gifts and hampers for our Winter Gift Programme etc. A student who had participated in the charity events commented, 'It gives me a sense of purpose in life instils a sense of responsibility inside me.'

Views of parents and carers

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They feel it provides brilliant provisions and education which helps develop confidence and maturity in their children and enables them to grow in faith. They say all staff are very approachable and they can raise any concerns with them.

Glossary

What inspection judgments mean

Grade	Judgment	Description
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. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.