

# Madina-tul-Uloom Al Islamic College

Inspection report for boarding school

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC043039                       |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 4 March 2009                   |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Dawn Taylor / Jackie Callaghan |
| <b>Type of Inspection</b>      | Key                            |

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| <b>Registered person</b>       | Madinatul Uloom Al-Islamiya Islamic College   |
| <b>Head / Principal</b>        | Mr Hans   |
| <b>Nominated person</b>        |   |
| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 21 June 2005  |

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## About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

## The inspection judgements and what they mean

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Outstanding:  | this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality |
| Good:         | this aspect of the provision is strong                        |
| Satisfactory: | this aspect of the provision is sound                         |
| Inadequate:   | this aspect of the provision is not good enough               |

## Service information

### Brief description of the service

Madinatul Uloom Al Islamiya is an independent Islamic boarding school for boys dedicated to providing Islamic as well as secular education. Opened in 1992, it has a 22 acre rural site four miles southeast of Kidderminster. All teaching blocks and residential accommodation are set within the college campus. Students are allocated to hostels according to their age group. There are currently 236 students on roll aged from 12 to 24. There are no students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and none at an early stage of acquiring English.

Madinatul Uloom aims 'to educate the students and instil in them the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and practices of our Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as well as other arts and sciences. It also strives to promote and cultivate good behaviour, morals, mutual respect and tolerance. This in turn creates a friendly, caring and motivated environment.'

This inspection focused on those under 18, who lived in three of the five boarding houses.

### Summary

This is an announced full inspection undertaken by two inspectors over three days. The inspection looked at all the key standards for the Boarding School National Minimum Standards and one previous recommendation.

The overall outcome judgement for Madinatul Uloom is outstanding. Being Healthy, Staying Safe, Enjoying and Achieving, Positive Contribution and Organisation are outstanding. Economic Wellbeing is satisfactory.

Madinatul Uloom are continuously developing their boarding provision. It is recognised, however, that they are working within tight financial restraints. Accommodation is adequate, considering the comparatively low fees charged by the college to enable students from less affluent backgrounds to study. The accommodation, being currently adequate, continues to be developed and upgraded as and when finances allow. The college excels at promoting and cultivating outstanding behaviour, morals, respect and tolerance. This in turn creates a friendly, caring and motivated environment that is integral to the teaching of the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth. Consequently, the students experience a safe and nurturing environment that enables them to flourish successfully.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

### Improvements since the last inspection

The college were asked to ensure staff received appropriate health and safety training. The college has now appointed a staff member with a health and safety lead who has, along with a core group of staff, attended relevant external training appropriate to this position. This sufficiently ensures that all students' welfare is actively safeguarded.

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Students' health is extensively promoted because the college has highly developed policies and procedures that are effectively and proficiently put into practice by well informed staff. The college employs two supervisors with a specific medical lead. They oversee the college's medical processes and support a core group of staff all who have current first aid training. The college's policies include detailed prescribed medication procedures and a procedure for the storage and administration of non-prescribed medication that is endorsed by the local doctor. Records demonstrate staff's comprehensive understanding of the nature and effects of medication. Accidents are recorded and monitored to identify patterns and trends. This information is then used to inform risk assessments and future practice. Consent for medication and first aid is sought from parents prior to admission to the college to ensure students health and wellbeing needs are actively met.

Students' welfare is further promoted because a record is kept of the outcomes of all medical appointments to ensure any ongoing concerns are addressed. Information regarding the health and medical histories of each student is gained as part of the college's admission process through proactive contact with families. This ensures individual's needs are identified and receive immediate and appropriate response when they are taken ill.

Topics related to personal, social and health education are explored with students through both the Islamic and secular curriculum. College policy and practice successfully enables students to develop an understanding of the physical and emotional changes they will experience and offers information and strategies to empower them to make informed and responsible decisions. This successful practice is underpinned by resourceful tutorials.

As an Islamic college there are also established mentor lead practice of speeches and Naseehat (advice) that provides additional peer lead opportunities for students to develop their understanding.

Students' religious and health related dietary needs are met by a team of catering staff responsible for the provision and preparation of meals. These staff have a comprehensive understanding of what makes up a healthy balanced diet. All students are required to eat their main meals in a central dining room but can also buy food from the tuck shop and make snacks in the boarding houses. Menu planning is culturally appropriate and offers a range of food to encourage students to try new dishes. The catering staff play an integral role in celebrating student success and marking major events by preparing special meals. For example, when a student memorises the complete Holy Qur'an.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

Students' safety is promoted because staff listen and take appropriate actions to ensure their welfare.

Bullying is not an issue within Madinatul Uloom's community. One member of staff stated that 'everyone has some differences and it is important that we recognise and teach the students to value those differences.....Islamic theology studies is another way of educating the children about responsible relationships with others'. Staff are well informed and have up to date information on local safeguarding procedures. The college has three nominated safeguarding officers who have attended the local authority's basic training and are due to attend the manager's safeguarding course in March 2009. These staff have also undertaken the training

for trainers course that enables them to cascade the local authority's safeguarding training to all college staff.

On many planned occasions, and when situations arise, staff go to great efforts to encourage students to think about the difference between right and wrong. They are supported to behave in ways that will sustain them in the community once they have achieved independence. As a result, students are taught to value one another's racial, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This promotes a boarding environment that truly reflects equality.

End of year awards truly celebrate individual achievements. Students spoke enthusiastically about rewards for good behaviour and academic achievements, stating that sanctions are rarely used. Students' voice that staff will often discuss and explore the consequences with them rather than issuing a sanction. Consequently, this reinforces and encourages students' positive behaviour.

Students state that the college respects their privacy and confidentiality. The college is in the process of installing CCTV throughout the campus. Discussions with the head teacher explored the various positions of cameras in the boarding house corridors. Students say they feel safe having the cameras in the boarding houses and they do not see them as an infringement on their privacy. The college store the images in-line with data protection guidance and the monitor is in the head teacher's office, thereby, appropriately safeguarding students' image.

The college has an effective complaints procedure and information about this is available to students and parents through written material. Students state that they do not need to use this procedure because any concerns can be directly and quickly discussed with staff or the head teacher. They feel staff respond quickly to any concerns raised and are thoughtfully resolved.

Students express confidence in the safety and security of the college. They learn how to protect themselves in an emergency because they regularly practice the emergency escape drill and staff receive fire training. Safe procedures are in place to protect students through tests on fire systems and other electrical equipment at appropriate intervals. Environmental risk assessments are in place and systematically ensure that all potential hazards are identified and reduced.

The college continues to operate a robust staff vetting procedure. Staff recruitment files contain extensive evidence of recruitment checks that have taken place prior to staff being employed. This includes an appropriate enhanced criminal record bureau check. All adults who visit the boarding accommodation are supervised by staff. This excellent practice ensures that students are appropriately safeguarded.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Students receive excellent personal support from staff. Each student has one or more persons to whom they can turn to for advice and/or guidance. The tutorial system within the college enables students to actively engage with their learning. As a result, this develops and challenges them which in-turn excites their imagination. They are successfully empowered to be morally

aware facilitating them to distinguish the principles between right and wrong. Consequently, this assists students in enhancing self-concept values and developing emotional confidence.

The college believes that each student has the right to extend his intellectual growth in an atmosphere of positive encouragement and in conditions that are conducive to learning. The college's Independent listener is known and familiar to students, many of whom mention him positively.

The college aims to provide an environment in which students are encouraged to develop self-discipline and respect for oneself, fellow students and staff. This successfully demonstrates that the college is well-ordered and caring. Students are developing an awareness of different cultures and respect for them. This helps them understand their own long-term needs and encourages them to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others within the college and the community at large. The college encourages students to exercise choice within their framework but also teaches them to understand and develop an awareness of the effects of their choice on themselves and those around them.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Staff respond to students in a positive and supportive way and students are equally positive about their relationship with staff. One student states that 'I have been to previous schools but you don't have the love that you have here. I can go to my teacher and I can talk to him as if he is my father or my brother. This is an amazing place'. Another student says 'lots of the supervisors and teachers are ex-pupils so they understand what it is like to board here and are able to answer all your questions and offer reassurance'. As a result, students feel listened to and highly-valued and respected by all the staff.

The college demonstrates a positive attitude to students' families and parental contact. Parents often visit their children and take them out for a weekend. New students are introduced to the college and are given a mentor. This can be a supervisor, a relative already at the college, a friend or a responsible student who is the same age or if possible from the same town. This person assists the new student and successfully supports them to settle in. Many students spoke about not having time to feel homesick and that they see the college as a 'home from home'.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is satisfactory.

Madinatul Uloom college is set in a twenty-two acre rural site four miles southeast of Kidderminster. All teaching blocks and residential accommodation are set within the college campus. There are five boarding houses, each a slightly different design and able to accommodate different numbers of students. Boarders are allocated to houses according to their age group. There is one boarding house that accommodates boarders under the age of 16 and two that accommodate boarders under the age of 18. The remaining two boarding houses accommodate boarders over the age of 18.

The standard of boarding accommodation is adequate. There is an established programme of refurbishment and development, which includes boarding facilities. Over the past three years a third boarding house has been opened and refurbishment work has been undertaken in the

two existing boarding houses to include double glazed windows, CCTV and new fire alarm systems.

Most boarders share a bedroom with one other student except in one boarding house where there are shared dormitories. Each boarding house has a small common room that provides a shared space for students and staff to meet with one another once students have returned to their houses. There are also kitchen areas for the use of all boarders. Students say accommodation is comfortable, well heated and lit. Boarders refer to their accommodation as 'home from home'. There are an appropriate number of washing facilities.

All accommodation is maintained generally to a reasonable standard by a team of support staff. These are employed by the college, as opposed to external contractors. The support staff are integral to the college's success and are involved at more than one level with the students.

The college provides each boarder with a lockable secure place where they can keep their possessions. There are very effective systems for recording pocket money held on behalf of students.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Madinatul Uloom has a Statement of Boarding Practice and Principles, which is contained in both the student's and staff handbook. These contain the college's policies and procedures, which are vibrant and comprehensively reflect the values and ethos of the college

Students boarding experience is underpinned by the college's clear philosophy and strong management team. The college continues to invest in the development and training of its staff, whose deployment and performance are effective. It is clear that students have great respect and regard for the staff caring for them. They state that they 'are safe in the knowledge that there is always someone here' and that 'the relationships between staff and students is informal, more like a friendship, and this goes a long way towards motivating students and developing themselves'.

Madinatul Uloom has substantial strengths and where areas for improvement emerge the college recognises and manages them well. There are very clear lines of management and communication. The senior management team provide effective monitoring and evaluation of relevant records and events such as the complaints, child protection and discipline logs.

Consultation and regular communication ensures proper scrutiny and advancement of all aspects of a student's care. Any shortfalls in these areas are identified and addressed very quickly. This quality monitoring and other similar initiatives contribute to the college's overall strategic aim and implementation.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. The college's values, ethos and teachings results in students' who are interested and inquisitive about the wider world. This means students' truly appreciate the significance of differing spiritual values and are capable of developing their faith, according to their individual consciences.

## What must be done to secure future improvement?

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

| Standard | Action | Due date |
|----------|--------|----------|
|----------|--------|----------|

### Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):