

Darul Uloom London

Independent school progress monitoring inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Daniel Towl
Social care inspector	Lucy Martin

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, and under the Care Standards Act 2000 having regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools or residential special schools^{1,2,3}

The inspection was conducted at the request of the Registration Authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan following the previous inspection.

Information about the school

Darul Uloom is an Islamic boarding school in Chislehurst, Kent, for students aged from 11 to 20. All students are boarders. There are 150 students on roll; none has a statement of special educational needs. A very few students are at an early stage of learning English though many are bilingual. The school aims to provide '.....high quality Islamic and secular education for the Muslim community...'. High importance is placed in developing students to be '....great scholars and Huffaz...'.

Context of the inspection

The school's last inspection, in May 2011, was a combined boarding and education inspection and included the scrutiny of aspects of the school's provision which had been identified in earlier inspections as requiring significant improvement. While identifying some improvements, the inspection in May 2011 judged that there were still some remaining concerns, mainly over the school's provision for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of its students. Regulatory failures therefore remained, including non-compliance with some national minimum standards for boarding.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

The school has made good progress in addressing the areas that were found to be failing in the inspection undertaken in May 2011. The school now meets all the regulations relating to The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010⁴ ('the Regulations'). Most of the failings related to boarding school national minimum standards are now met. The two standards which remain unmet concern the lack of rigour of recording of the administration of medicines to students who are ill and the lack of training for the head of care.

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

³ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2000/ukpga_20000014_en_1

⁴ www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made

The last inspection found failings in the curriculum especially with history and physical education. There were also concerns about the lack of experiences to develop students' knowledge of national institutions and understanding of other cultures and community groups.

The school has improved its curriculum and changes are now being implemented. History and physical education now have schemes of work. The history secular curriculum complements the Islamic history taught in Islamic studies. The scheme of work focuses on British history and largely follows the requirements of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 3. During the inspection, Year 7 students were studying British castles and Year 9 the history of slavery. Physical education is taught each week to all students. The scheme follows national guidance and includes developing students' coordination skills as well as their skills such as defence and attack in order to play particular games. Students were studying football skills during the inspection. Year 7 students were pleased with their improving ball skills. Plans to use the school's gymnasium currently remain on hold until all staff have been suitably trained. Improvements in the programme for citizenship include more lessons about local and national democracy as well as learning the personal skills required to be good citizens, for example being able to enquire and research in order to solve problems. As evidenced during the inspection, much emphasis is given to encouraging students to be good and helpful citizens and to show respect for others.

Although there is still room for improvement the school has now planned for and undertaken some activities to widen its links with the community. Roles and responsibilities for developing these aspects have been more clearly assigned to the head of school. Recently, the school invited students from a local Church of England school to enable discussion on peace and faith. Students are able to explain the main tenets of other religions such as Judaism and Hinduism. The school has been proactive in seeking contacts with other cultures and faiths. Students recently studied the local history of Chislehurst and visited Bromley church. Some older students attended a Bromley community forum.

In the previous inspection there were concerns about weaknesses in the application of rigorous health and safety procedures including the lack of necessary risk assessments; the cleanliness and quality of decoration, furniture and fittings; and inadequate supervision of students who are ill. Concerns were also raised in that inspection that staff and students were sharing washing facilities.

The school has established a new management structure with clear areas of responsibility. As part of this process, it has also revised and strengthened the management structure for boarding. A head of care and boarding has been appointed who oversees the head housemaster and the other boarding staff. Welfare, health and safety procedures have received more attention. Policies are now being suitably applied.

Key risk assessments have been undertaken and, where required, actions have been taken to improve safety. A thorough fire risk and health and safety audit has been undertaken by an external company. There is now a policy for dealing with major incidents and crises should they arise. The school has appointed a head of facilities to oversee all health and safety matters including risk assessments. This has ensured a consistent approach. The induction given to new staff includes suitable information regarding health and safety, although the head of care has not yet received relevant training commensurate with the post and its responsibilities.

The school has revised the medication policy and medication administration forms and sought advice from healthcare professionals. There is some work still to do to strengthen the administration records to ensure they are fully completed both for prescribed and non-prescribed medication. Any students who feel unwell stay in the medical room which has a bed and bathroom facilities nearby. The school's offices are close by which enable staff to check students on a regular basis. There are regular key-worker and welfare meetings. These ensure that boarders who are in need of additional support are identified and welfare plans can be put in place.

The school's menus have been reviewed in discussion with students and have had professional confirmation that they meet nutritional standards. Students store their own food in lockers and fridges in the dining room which have been provided for their use. Since the last inspection the school has been inspected by the local environmental health officer and awarded a three-star rating for food hygiene which indicates a good level of legal compliance. Boarders do not keep any food or drink in their bedrooms and use the lockers and fridges provided in the dining room.

The school has developed job descriptions for staff for their specific roles. In addition to staff induction about health and safety, school policies are also discussed when they start employment. There are newly introduced systems for the supervision and appraisal of boarding staff. One member of boarding staff is undertaking external training for the role and there are plans for further training.

There is a two-year programme for the decoration and maintenance of the boarding accommodation. This includes the replacement of a number of windows, replacing or repainting of bedroom furniture and the redecoration of some bathrooms. Cleaners have been employed to ensure that bedrooms are kept clean. Resident staff have separate washing facilities which are clearly labelled.

Procedures for recruiting staff and correctly maintaining a central staff register now meet requirements.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').

National minimum standards

In order to meet the national minimum standards for boarding schools and associated regulations, the school should:

- implement a more rigorous and robust procedure for recording the administration of prescribed and non-prescribed medication (NM 3.1)
- ensure that the head of care completes appropriate training commensurate with the role and its responsibilities (NM 13.2).

School details

School status	Independent
Type of school	Islamic boarding
Date school opened	1988
Age range of pupils	11–20 years
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	150
Number of boarders	150
Annual fees (boarders)	£2,700
Address of school	Foxbury Avenue Chiselhurst Kent BR7 6SD
Telephone number	020 8295 0637
Email address	Darulubom786@hotmail.com
Principal	Mustafa Musa
Proprietor	Darul Uloom London