

Darul Uloom London

Foxbury Avenue, Off Perry Street, Chislehurst, BR7 6SD

Inspection dates

23–25 September 2013

Context of the inspection

- This unannounced progress monitoring inspection was undertaken at the request of the Department for Education to evaluate the progress made by the school in the implementation of its action plan.
- The school and boarding provision were last inspected on 26–28 February 2013. During this inspection it was found that the school failed to meet a large number of the education standards and two of the national minimum standards for boarding, notably in respect of the secular curriculum and its teaching, the personal development of students, the maintenance of the school and boarding accommodation, and the checking of the suitability of staff to work with children.
- The school submitted an action plan on 22 April 2013 that was evaluated on 24 April 2013. The action plan and timescale for implementation were found to require improvement.
- A further evaluation that took place on 3 May 2013 found that the action plan and timescales for implementation also required improvement for several reasons. These included: the timescales given in the action plan referred only to implementation and did not recognise that sustained implementation of systems is important, such as use of assessment and tracking of progress through data; there was insufficient explanation of how lessons will be formulated to meet the required standards; the curriculum provision for aesthetic and creative, careers education and adequate preparation for pupils in respect of the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life were not satisfactorily outlined in the plan; and there was no mention of the need to address weaknesses regarding the reported ineffective heating system in the school.
- In June 2013 a fire occurred at the school. Some damage was done to the building but no students were hurt in, or as a result of, the incident.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

Regulations not met

The February 2013 inspection found that the school's curriculum was not planned or timetabled well enough to support students' learning in secular subjects. It also noted that there were no plans for an information and communication technology (ICT) curriculum and insufficient opportunities for students to use computers enough to develop appropriate skills in other lessons. A new curriculum policy is now in place and underpinned by commercially purchased schemes of work for each subject. While these provide progression across the key stages they have yet to be implemented effectively at classroom level to ensure that all students make sufficient progress. For example, teachers place too much reliance on the commercial lesson planned and do not sufficiently customise lessons to meet the needs of different groups within their classes. While students now receive appropriate weekly ICT lessons, some shortfalls in the curriculum

remain. The curriculum for physical education is inadequately implemented and, as a result, students are not developing the skills or receiving sufficient breadth of experiences. The provision for aesthetic and cultural subjects is also inadequate because it is too narrow and experiences outside the classroom are not planned or coordinated well enough to make up this deficiency. Consequently, these three failed curriculum regulations remain unmet.

At the time of the last inspection it was noted that while the planning for personal and social education and citizenship was in place, it was not delivered as planned. As a result, students were not given opportunities to learn about public institutions and services in England. This issue has now been addressed with both citizenship and personal and social education timetabled. The February 2013 inspection also found that there was insufficient guidance about secular careers and qualifications for the careers that students may choose. For example, older boys were hazy about what qualifications they would need in order to become a doctor or lawyer.

The school has engaged an external careers advice provider. All sixth form students have been interviewed individually and with the external advisers' help they have developed a career pathway plan so that they are now clear what they need do to achieve their ambitions. Interviews for Year 11 are planned shortly and other activities include a careers day provided by the external organisation. It was also found that there were too few opportunities to be adequately prepared for the responsibilities and experiences of adult life. An increased range of visits and visiting speakers, together with the much improved careers advice and citizenship and personal and social education teaching, is ensuring that students are better prepared for adult life beyond school. These regulations are now met.

Teaching and assessment were judged inadequate at the time of the last inspection. This was because they did not enable the boys to make adequate progress in secular subjects. In these subjects, teachers did not use assessment information to plan lessons which met the needs of all the individual students so that for some the work was too easy and for others, too hard. In addition, it was judged that the boys were given too few opportunities to develop their analytical and evaluative skills and to think things out for themselves; most teaching was focused on knowledge acquisition. Teachers did not use questioning well to correct misconceptions, probe answers or support students to develop their understanding. It was also found that the formal assessment of the secular studies which was being introduced at the December 2011 full inspection had stalled and that the school was unsure that its assessments were accurate.

The school's action plan identified a range of initiatives to improve the quality of secular subject teaching which have since been implemented. Consultants have delivered training with lesson observations and feedback to help teachers to improve their teaching. The school has introduced a structured approach to planning lessons and all teachers are expected to routinely assess students' progress throughout lessons. Teachers' specialist subject knowledge is good. The introduction of the commercial schemes of work together with the associated textbooks is providing teachers with a framework for planning lessons and delivering content. While there have been some improvements in teaching, its overall quality remains inadequate. This is because teachers still focus too much on the activities they would like their students to do rather than what they will learn in the course of the lesson. Expectations of what students can achieve are often too low. While all teachers tell students what they expect them to learn at the start of each lesson, these are often topic headings or lists of tasks rather than clear statements about what knowledge and skills the

students will acquire.

Teachers still do not effectively use school assessment data to customise the commercial schemes and so plan lessons which meet the needs of different ability groups. Consequently, not all students are making sufficient progress, in particular those who are more able. The more able often complete work ahead of their peers because it lacks depth and challenge to help them reach their potential. While it is evident that there have been improvements in teaching, such as the use of pair work and peer assessment, this is not secure, particularly for teaching at Key Stage 3 which is weaker than that in Year 11 and the sixth form. All teachers are using progress checking cards. However, they do not routinely check the validity of students' self-assessments. Marking is still a weak feature of teaching because it does not inform students of how to improve their work. Teachers' assessments of students work are inaccurate particularly at Key Stage 3 and poor presentation and inaccuracies in students' writing are not consistently corrected across the school. Consequently, the four teaching regulations failed at the last inspection remain unmet.

The inspection of February 2013 reported that students did not have the opportunity to develop a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England and that opportunities for them to learn about crime and punishment in Britain were still not available. The school has put in place a new curriculum for students' personal, social, health and citizenship education. This is being delivered through weekly lessons in personal, social, health education and citizenship to all students in Key Stages 3 and 4. New textbooks have been purchased to support the teaching in these lessons and a new programme of visits and speakers put in place. This term the students have already been spoken to by the Deputy Mayor of London. An observation of a citizenship lesson during the inspection verified that the scheme is now being suitably implemented. These regulations are now met.

The inspection in February 2013 judged welfare, health and safety to be inadequate. This related to a number of discrepancies around the way in which school and boarding staff had been recruited. All school and boarding staff had been subject to an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check but records suggested that a gap in employment has meant that one check was no longer valid and had not been updated. The school has acted to rectify this. Three senior staff, including the Head of Boarding who leads on recruitment, have attended safer recruitment training. A recruitment audit was conducted by an external consultant in April 2013 and the guidance supplied was used in the development of the new recruitment policy and procedures, which follows DfE guidance. The previous report stated that files were not well ordered. This issue has also been addressed along with a review of all the required checks for all members of staff. This has included the verification of references, where possible, the checking of gaps in employment and new criminal records checks and barred list checks with the single central record suitably updated. During the monitoring visit it was noted that there were some omissions in the verification of the checks. These were updated using the information in the new recruitment checklists kept at the front of each member of staff's file. The two most recent staff recruitment files reflect the new procedures. The regulations and national minimum standards for checking the suitability and safe recruitment of staff are now met.

The last inspection in February 2013 found a number of minor hazards around the school and boarding house which indicated that the school's accommodation and facilities were

not maintained to a sufficient standard to ensure the welfare, health and safety of students. In particular, the handles for some toilets and shower cubicles did not allow for the doors to be opened in an emergency; the lighting of an uneven pathway between the school and boarding area did not work; and two internal doors were missing their automatic closing mechanism. The pathway is no longer uneven, the lighting has been fixed and the automatic mechanisms on all the fire doors now operate as they should. The school has put right the damage to the rear part of the school that occurred during the fire. In the report it also noted that record keeping of risk assessments was not clear about what had been resolved and what was still outstanding. The school has revised its systems for risk assessments. These are better than before with clear formats used for completion of identified work although these could be more rigorous to ensure no areas of concern are missed. Nonetheless, risk assessments and daily checks are being used to inform the maintenance schedule of necessary actions to promote the health and safety of everyone within the school. The school has identified a member of staff to take on the role of 'estates management' with training, including for risk assessment, booked for this October. While the welfare, health and safety regulations and national minimum standards are now met it must be noted that there is less scrutiny applied to quality of provision so the general aesthetics of the premises continue to present as tired and worn.

At the time of the inspection in February 2013 the school provided most of the required information for parents, carers and others. However, the name and address of the chair of Trustees for correspondence and particulars of the education provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language and the academic performance of students were not provided. These failings have been rectified and all the required information is now provided either through the school website or in the school's prospectus which is available on request or can be downloaded from the internet.

During the February 2013 inspection, two of the national minimum standards for boarding were not met. The boarding and school accommodation were found to be cold, although extra heaters had been provided for boarders in their rooms. Repairs to old vents on windows have reduced draughts and thermometers are now situated throughout the boarding area to monitor the temperature. The school has plans to update the current heating system. It was also found that staff had not been fully checked for their suitability to work with children. As noted above, recruitment procedures now meet requirements and the one check that had not been updated has been addressed. Although not noted in the report it was recommended that a new Independent Listener be appointed. The new listener, a retired doctor, has no obvious connections to the school and has so far conducted two visits to introduce himself and his role to the students. All national minimum standards for boarding are now met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements and national minimum standards for boarding schools

The school requires improvement and must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 ('the Regulations'), and associated requirements

Ensure there is a curriculum policy set out in writing and supported by plans and schemes of work that is implemented effectively. Paragraph (2)(1)

Ensure that the curriculum gives pupils of compulsory school age a full-time education with experience in the following areas of learning: linguistic, 2(2)(a)

mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative.

Ensure that the curriculum provides opportunities for all pupils to learn and make progress. Paragraph 2(2)(i)

Ensure that teaching enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught. Paragraph 3(a)

Ensure that lessons are well planned, effective teaching methods and suitable activities are utilised and that class time is appropriately managed. Paragraph 3(c)

Ensure that teachers have a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of their pupils and take account of these when planning lessons. Paragraph 3(d)

Assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use the information from the assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can make progress. Paragraph 3(g)

Inspection team

Angela Corbett, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ann Henderson	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sophie Wood	Social Care Inspector

Information about this school

- Darul Uloom London is a small Islamic boarding school which is now registered for students aged from 11 to 25 years. The school opened in 1988 and is located in purpose-built premises in Chislehurst, Kent.
- There are currently 155 students on roll, including 22 in the sixth form, all of whom are Muslim males. They all board in accommodation which is co-located with the school.
- No student has a statement of special educational needs.
- Students follow a secular curriculum as well as a religious one and are also trained to become religious leaders in the Muslim community.
- The school aims to 'prepare Muslim students to be good Muslims and responsible citizens; to embed in the student a sense of discipline; to enable them to grow up to become upright, respectable and worthy citizens'.
- There is no alternative provision made for students, but students in the sixth form can study a range of online courses.
- The school and its boarding provision were last inspected in February 2013.

School details

Unique reference number	101695
Social care unique reference number	SC006927
Inspection number	423054
DfE registration number	305/6077
<p>This inspection was conducted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005.</p> <p>The inspection of boarding provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools. The inspection of residential provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools.</p>	
Type of school	Secondary Islamic school
School status	Independent boarding school
Age range of pupils	11–25
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	155
Number of boarders on roll	155
Proprietor	Darul Uloom London
Chair	Mufti Mustafa Musa
Headteacher	Mufti Mustafa Musa
Date of previous school inspection	26–28 February 2013
Annual fees (boarders)	£3,000
Telephone number	020 8295 0637
Email address	Darululoom786@hotmail.com

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