

# Darul Uloom London

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

<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–12 June 2014	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils	Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching	Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Leadership and management	Requires improvement	3
Overall effectiveness of the boarding experience	Adequate	3

## Summary of key findings

### This school requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- The achievement of students requires improvement. Students do not achieve as well as they could in secular subjects.
- Teaching in the secular subjects has improved but is not yet consistently good. Teachers do not always ensure sufficient challenge for the most able or check students' understanding within lessons frequently enough to secure consistently good progress.
- Leaders do not make efficient use of the assessment information for checking students' rates of progress.
- Leaders and trustees are now making checks on the different aspects of school life including the quality of teaching and boarding. However, they do not routinely check the impact of actions on students' well-being, achievement and personal development.
- Leaders of both education and boarding are not sufficiently accurate in their views about how well the school is doing. This hinders their plans for the future.
- The review process to check on the effectiveness of policies in relation to students' welfare, health and safety is not made clear.

### The school has the following strengths

- Students make good progress in Islamic studies because the curriculum is planned and taught well, and progress is carefully checked.
- Students feel safe and secure. The boarding accommodation, while improved, is adequate. Boarding and teaching staff work together well to provide good pastoral guidance.
- Students have strong moral values. They are thoughtful, courteous and behave exceptionally well. They are enthusiastic learners and like to work hard.
- The trustees, leaders and managers have acted to address the failed regulations. They have secured improvement in the teaching of secular subjects and the curriculum.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements and national minimum standards for boarding schools

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

- The school meets the national minimum standards for boarding schools.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection took place on the dates agreed with the Department for Education and the school.
- The inspectors observed teaching in 14 lessons taught by eight different teachers, including four joint observations with the head of the National Curriculum and a consultant. There was no formal teaching in Year 11 or in secular lessons in the sixth form taking place during the inspection.
- Meetings took place with three trustees, the Principal who is also the Chair of the Trustees, the head of strategic development, the head of the National Curriculum, the head of care, boarding and human resources, the head of Islamic Studies, a group of staff and three groups of students. Telephone calls were made to three parents.
- The team also attended a student-led Anjamen (religious recital), visited the boarding accommodation and spoke to boarders informally at breaks and mealtimes.
- Inspectors examined students' work, examination results, the school's own records of students' progress, and a range of documentation including schemes of work, policies and boarding records.
- The inspectors considered 12 responses to Ofsted's online parental questionnaire, Parent View, and 21 staff questionnaires, but students were not given the opportunity to complete Ofsted's online Point-in-Time survey.

## Inspection team

Angela Corbett, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

John Daniel

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sophie Wood

Social Care Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Darul Uloom London is a small Islamic boarding school which is registered for students aged from 11 to 25. The school opened in 1988 and is located in purpose-built premises in Chislehurst, Kent.
- There are currently 131 students on roll, including 21 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 and none is learning to speak English as an additional language.
- Students follow a secular curriculum as well as a religious one and are also trained to become religious leaders in the Muslim community.
- There is no alternative provision made for students, but students in the sixth form can study a range of online courses.
- 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'.
- 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. Following the inspection the school submitted action plans, the first in late April and a second plan in early May 2013. Both were judged to require improvement.
- A follow-up monitoring visit took place in September 2013 to check on the school's progress in meeting the regulations. The two national minimum standards for boarding were judged as met but seven regulations, all in respect of the secular curriculum and its teaching, remained unmet.
- This inspection also addresses a request from the Department for Education (DfE) to check the progress the school has made in addressing the seven regulations which remained failed since the progress monitoring inspection.
- Since the last inspection, the school has appointed a new head of strategic development and one teacher has left.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to good or outstanding in order to raise achievement in secular subjects by:
  - ensuring teachers plan lessons to stretch and challenge the most able
  - encouraging teachers to check students' understanding more frequently so that learning can be reshaped as needed
  - broaden the range of resources used, including books for reading and reference, to better support students' learning
  - develop marking practices so that students routinely act on the advice and challenges provided by teachers.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - making better use of assessment information in the secular subjects for checking on students' progress to raise their achievement
  - placing greater emphasis on having an accurate analysis of how well the school is doing and of the impact of actions to better inform plans for the future.
- Improve the boarding provision by:

- completing the ongoing review of recruitment and safeguarding guidance in line with updated guidance from the DfE
- reviewing and updating written job descriptions
- reviewing the current recording mechanisms in respect of boarders' individual welfare needs
- considering the value of bringing together associated policies, including those relating to welfare, health and safety
- making sure all leaders increase their evaluation of all aspects of boarding including how well the national minimum standards for boarding are met.

## Inspection judgements

### Achievement of pupils

### Requires improvement

- The overall achievement of students in Key stages 3 and 4 and the sixth form requires improvement. This is because not all students achieve as well as they could across the secular curriculum.
- In both 2012 and 2013, an above-average proportion of students achieved five A\* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics. Students made good progress in mathematics but this was not the case in other subjects. For example, fewer made good progress in English and science, and achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) was inadequate due a lack of sufficient teaching of this subject in the past.
- Progress rates are improving with higher proportions of students making better than expected progress as a result of better teaching in secular subjects. When students are fully engaged in activities which stimulate and challenge them in line with their ability, their progress is good. Achievement in ICT is no longer inadequate. School assessment data indicate that a slightly higher proportion are set to achieve five or more A\* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics in 2014.
- The improved physical education curriculum and the inclusion of art at Key Stage 3, and access to technological, aesthetic and cultural enrichment activities, are enabling students of compulsory school age to make progress in all of the required areas of learning. Students spoke very positively about these better experiences. They particularly enjoyed their day at the Sky Skills Studio. The school's checks on this new provision reflects their commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all and that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Consequently, some variations in progress rates across the school, including for the most able, remain both in and between the secular subjects.
- Good focus is now placed on developing students' literacy skills across the secular curriculum. The quality of students' written work, speaking and language skills is improving. Students who may need additional help with their learning are supported well by teachers in lessons and they receive well-placed extra help out of school hours from boarding staff and older students.
- In the sixth form, the new AS courses provide greater choice for students. The teaching is now regular and recent assessment data show promising progress towards the targets set by the school for each student. Assessment data and evidence from books indicate progress in the first year of AS courses. The new Level 3 vocational course in care and education is proving popular with students. Initial online assessments show that students have already secured progress.
- Students make good progress in Islamic Studies developing a deep theological understanding of Islam. Through recitation of the Qur'an and explanations of passages to their peers and staff students develop self-esteem and confidence as they progress through the school. Many achieve Hafeez (the ability to recite the whole of the Qur'an from memory) within four years and others achieving Alim (a recognition of Islamic learning) within seven years.
- The new careers education programme, together with the well-planned teaching in personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE), is raising students' aspirations and preparing them well for the future. They have high aspirations for their futures. As a result of the strong guidance and support offered by the boarding team and teachers, students develop into confident, respectful and independent young adults.

### Quality of teaching

### Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement. Although teaching in secular subjects is improving and has some strengths, it is not consistently good enough to ensure students achieve well over time.
- Teachers are now using assessment information to plan lessons, and are taking better account of students' different abilities. However, while supporting the less able well, they are not always

providing sufficient challenge for the most able. Learning activities are more varied and teachers' expectations are rising. The new teaching assistant is used well to support in-class learning, for example supporting less-able students to grasp the concepts of calculating surface area and volume of compound shapes in a mathematics lesson.

- In a Year 10 English lesson and Year 7 history lesson, teachers effectively used a wider range of resources including ICT to support students' learning. Overall, however, classroom resources to help students to learn 'by doing', such as the use of '3-D' shapes in mathematics, although sufficient, are quite limited.
- Teachers are increasingly using questioning with skill to promote learning and develop students' speaking skills. While teachers check on students' level of understanding in lessons, this is not always done with sufficient frequency, and is not always followed by the reshaping of learning when necessary to secure good progress.
- Students have good opportunities to think for themselves and express their opinions in conversation with a partner as well as in whole-class discussions.
- Students regularly have opportunities to develop their writing skills in subjects other than English. Reading is encouraged both in and out of lessons. Students spoke positively about the new reading club and how they are being encouraged to read for pleasure. However, the range and quantity of books both for reading and reference is too limited.
- Displays in the school and the boarding areas promote a positive ethos and support learning well.
- Students' secular work is marked frequently. Comments provide students with good-quality feedback on what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve. Students are beginning to act on teachers' advice to help them make better progress, but this has yet to become routine practice.
- The formal assessment of work undertaken in secular studies is now in place and the school is gathering a considerable amount of assessment information. This is helping teachers and leaders to make better checks on the progress students are making towards their targets. However, the moderation of assessments, for example by someone external to the school to ensure their accuracy, is not yet in place.
- The very effective teaching in both the Alim and Hifz (recitation) parts of the Islamic studies curriculum ensures students of all ages make good progress. Teachers use their extensive knowledge to check students' knowledge and understanding in lessons. They ensure that students have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve, for example marking students' copies of the Qur'an as they learn. Teachers carefully check students' progress using a well-established assessment system with additional help provided out of lessons to support learning when necessary.
- Collaboration between the boarding team and teachers in the school is strong; the boarding team are made aware of any concerns in school. Members of the boarding team and older students provide support with both the secular and Islamic Studies work.

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

## Good

- The school's work to protect students' safety is good. Boarders' understanding of different types of bullying and how to stay safe in a variety of situations, including how to stay safe on the internet, is good, but not yet outstanding.
- The education and boarding team work together well to supervise and care for students both in school and the boarding setting to ensure their health and safety. Staff act as strong role models and set high expectations for behaviour, politeness and courtesy. As a result, students get on well and their behaviour is exemplary. Students have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. They are very punctual to lessons, prayers and meal times, and work hard throughout the long school day and in the evening study times. They actively support each other in their learning and contribute willingly to whole-class discussions.

- British values are consistently promoted. Increased links with the local police, a magistrate, faith leaders and the local council, together with visits to museums, are enabling pupils to learn about the rule of law, democracy, and public institutions and services in England. Visiting speakers, Islamic education, and PSHCE lessons and open discussions further help students to learn tolerance and to respect the diversity found in modern Britain. A few of the oldest students voted in recent elections.
- Students say they feel very safe in the school. Students confirmed to inspectors that there are very few instances of bullying; they say it is 'like one family here'. Some added comments such as 'I feel very well cared for' and 'I can talk to staff, older pupils and the independent listener easily.' This is a view supported by parents, carers and staff.
- Students show respect for the boarding and school accommodation. They have created some new displays, such as one on the Five Pillars of Islam and another on British law. Students have good opportunities for religious leadership and are beginning to take on other responsibilities. For example, some older boys organised a world cup tournament that took place during the inspection. However, wider experiences beyond the school, while more frequent, remain limited.
- All staff are suitably trained in child protection, and understand how to act and follow the school's procedures. Leaders are vigilant and rigorous in following up concerns. Effective use is made of independent safeguarding consultants to improve practice, and leaders are endeavouring to establish links with the local authority safeguarding team.
- Good use is made of the school's outside area for play and physical education.

## Leadership and management

## Require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders, while keen to improve the school, are still too reliant on external advice and guidance. Nonetheless, senior leaders, with the trustees, have begun to develop a three-year vision for the school. However, they have yet to put in place effective systems to check on the impact of initiatives on students' achievement. They lack a suitable system for evaluating all aspects of the boarding and education provisions. Although the school has a wide range of assessment data to check on progress of each student and class, its use to check on the progress of different groups is underdeveloped.
- The trustees are much better informed about all aspects of boarding and education, including performance of students in both secular and Islamic studies. They are setting high expectations for the professionalism and performance of teachers, supporting senior leaders to tackle any underperformance and recognise good teaching. Together with senior leaders, they have now ensured that all the independent school regulations and national minimum standards for boarding are met.
- The quality of secular teaching is now checked by a senior leader and external consultant, and this is leading to tangible improvements in teaching. Well-established systems to check on the quality of teaching in Islamic studies have secured good teaching over time.
- Teachers of the secular subjects have taken responsibility for the schemes of work and developed systems to track students' progress.
- The school demonstrates a strong desire to keep its students safe. Students are suitably protected from potentially unsafe adults. Recruitment practice is sound. However, the leaders have yet to complete their revisions of the school's safeguarding policy to reflect the recently published revised statutory guidance.
- Health and safety procedures are diligently implemented and serve to protect everyone within the school. Risk assessments relating to the premises are thorough and effective. The school's policies for welfare, health and safety are regularly reviewed, although the links between the different but associated policies are not always clear to better inform practice and guide staff.
- A diligent approach is taken to ensure admissions procedures fully capture the welfare needs of prospective boarders. Staff know each boarder's unique needs very well, but this information is not always fully captured in records.

- The boarding staff team is growing in confidence and competence. Continued training is having a very positive impact on the quality of the care received by the boarders. The boarding team is cohesive and individuals understand their roles and responsibilities, although these are not sufficiently detailed in written job descriptions.
- The secular curriculum has been broadened, with all areas of learning for students of compulsory school age now covered. There is much greater emphasis on the development of students’ literacy and numeracy skills. The most able in Year 11 take GCSEs in each of the three science subjects. Older students now have much greater choice and the AS courses are matched to their interest. All courses are now supported by appropriate plans to ensure students’ academic progress over time. The school has further plans to develop the curriculum, for example, with more time for secular learning and the provision of design and technology.
- The long-standing Islamic curriculum is comprehensive and provides progression to the highest levels.
- The enrichment programme has also developed well. There are more after-school clubs as well as daily opportunities for after-school study supported by teachers, the boarding team staff and older students. An increased number of carefully chosen speakers and visits are taking place. These are providing meaningful experiences for students, such as a talk by a representative of the charity Mind. These activities, together with learning about other faiths in religious education and Islamic studies, make a significant contribution to students’ strong spiritual and moral awareness and their good personal, social and cultural development.
- The school and boarding accommodation provide a safe and secure physical environment. Both the boarding and school premises have been improved. The accommodation is much cleaner and feels more homely. Communal areas are brighter than before. Boarders have had a say in terms of the décor. Bathrooms provide suitable privacy and refurbishment of these areas is ongoing. New displays throughout the premises provide inspiration and have brightened the environment. Improvements in the main hall, used for dining and leisure, have been welcomed by the boys. They enjoy better access to indoor games such as table tennis and snooker, and have armchairs for socialising or reading newspapers and information leaflets like those on careers.
- The few responses to Parent View were overwhelmingly positive; these views were supported by the parents and carers spoken to by the inspectors. Parents and carers receive regular information on the boys’ progress.

**Outcomes for boarders**

**Good**

**Quality of boarding provision and care**

**Adequate**

**Boarders’ safety**

**Adequate**

**Leadership and management of the boarding provision**

**Adequate**

- Boarders enjoy and benefit from an adequate boarding experience.
- Over time, they become confident, mature young men, equipped with the life-skills they need to live independently. The wide range of career choices made by leavers demonstrates the rounded approach delivered by the education and boarding departments of the school.
- Boarders enjoy a healthy lifestyle. Good catering arrangements are complemented by plenty of physical activities to keep the boys fit and well. Instances of illness and accidents are rare. Sufficient arrangements ensure boarders have access to local medical services. Broader provision, such as counselling, is readily accessed when the need arises.
- Boarders form meaningful friendships with their peers and staff. A culture of acceptance and value is embedded. Boarders develop strong moral values and demonstrate tolerance and acceptance towards difference.

- The general conduct and behaviour of boarders is exemplary. Clear behavioural expectations are readily understood. Positive conduct is richly rewarded. The relatively low use of sanctions is indicative of a harmonious culture and environment. Nonetheless, behaviour records, while accurate, are not routinely checked and analysed for any patterns and trends to be identified and acted upon.

## What inspection judgements mean

School and boarding	
Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053).

Grade characteristics for the judgements made on the school's boarding/residential provision can be viewed in the *Evaluation schedule for the inspection of boarding and residential provision in schools* which is also available on the Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110096](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110096).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	101695
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SC006927
<b>Inspection number</b>	446329
<b>DfE registration number</b>	305/6077

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school. 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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Islamic school
<b>School status</b>	Independent boarding school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–25
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	131
<b>Number of boarders on roll</b>	131
<b>Proprietor</b>	Darul Uloom London
<b>Chair</b>	Mufti Mustafa Musa
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mufti Mustafa Musa
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26–28 February 2013
<b>Annual fees (boarders)</b>	£3,000
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8295 0637
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