

Jamiatul-ilm Wal Huda

30 Moss Street, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 5JT

Inspection dates	18/08/2015 to 20/08/2015	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Outstanding	1
The quality of care and support	Outstanding	1
How well children and young people are protected	Outstanding	1
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings

The boarding provision is outstanding because

- The school's senior staff team sets and maintains consistently high standards for the boarding facility. The principal himself commands deep respect and loyalty among staff and students. The quality of leadership creates a vibrant and purposeful community where everyone is respected and valued.
- Involvement of boarders with the local community is outstanding. They gain an understanding of the needs of others less fortunate than themselves and this enhances their own personal development. The school is effective in promoting British values, ensuring that students practise their Islamic faith while respecting the norms of wider society.
- Relationships within the boarding community and the wider school are excellent. Staff are caring and committed to the welfare of boarders. The trust that boarders have in staff promotes openness and a willingness to share any concerns they may have.
- Staff value the views and opinions of boarders. What boarders say has an impact, and results in improvements to the boarders' experience.
- Boarders feel exceptionally safe. There is effectively an absence of bullying. The school has a long-standing relationship with the police and the local authority. This is effective in countering radicalisation and extremism and promoting community cohesion.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for boarding schools

The school meets the national minimum standards for boarding schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the risk assessments for the premises to take account of the review and evaluation of accidents involving students.

Information about this inspection

The principal was given approximately four hours' notice of the inspection. The inspectors toured the accommodation and saw students' bedrooms and communal areas. They met with students both individually and in groups, took several meals with them, and observed school assemblies, worship, and leisure activities. There were no online survey forms available so these were distributed during the inspection, with 50 being completed and returned by students. The inspectors also met with the principal and members of the senior leadership team as well as other members of staff. The inspectors scrutinised records and policies and evaluated 25 parental responses from Parent View.

Inspection team

Mr Nick Murphy

Lead social care inspector

Mr Graham Robinson

Team social care inspector

Full Report

Information about this school

This independent school provides day and boarding places to male, Muslim students providing them with both Islamic and secular education. Boarding accommodation for students under 18 years is sited in one of two purpose-built school buildings. As well as classrooms and boarding provision, the school has its own mosque. Currently the school has a total of 488 pupils, with 108 boarding pupils under the age of 18 and 121 boarding pupils over the age of 18. It is situated in Blackburn, Lancashire.

The last inspection of the boarding provision was integrated with education, in December 2012. The overall judgement was outstanding.

Inspection Judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Outstanding

During the inspection students received their GCSE results and they are the best ever in the history of the school. All year 11 students achieved five A to C grades including English and Maths. The academic achievement of boarding students is particularly outstanding, analysis of examination results by the management team clearly showing the extra value that boarding brings. When asked what was best about boarding, a student said, 'The unity, we are like a family, we get a lot of support from the staff and from each other, this helps us with our education.'

Boarding students also develop exceptionally strong social skills and acquire confidence in their own abilities. At all times during the inspection, students greeted inspectors with smiles, making eye contact and saying hello. Boarders were all keen to meet and interact with inspectors. Boarders are immensely proud of the school and make excellent ambassadors for it.

Boarders are in excellent health. Since the last inspection, the school has strengthened healthcare arrangements. There have been improvements to medication policies, staff training, and guidance on specific conditions such as asthma.

The school's practices and procedures are highly effective at protecting boarders. The result is that boarders are unanimous in confirming that they feel safe at all times within residence. Leaders within the school have an excellent understanding of how the boarding provision needs to improve. They are ambitious for the school to evolve and develop its practice and they implement changes in a planned and highly effective way.

Relationships between boarders and each other, and with staff, are outstanding. Behaviour is uniformly excellent. Boarders treat everyone with respect and with consideration for their needs and feelings. Many boarders come from all parts of the world, but all become part of an inclusive community irrespective of their heritage.

Staffing levels ensure that there are always sufficient adults around to support and supervise boarders. Adult senior students act as part of the staff group, although their roles and responsibilities are limited and clearly defined by management. Boarders value the input of these senior students, regarding them as older brothers who provide sound advice and emotional comfort.

The importance that staff and leaders give to the views of boarders is a particular strength of the school. Various formal routes are in place to ensure that the voice of boarders is heard. These include monthly meetings of the boarders' council (members are elected by their peers), a suggestion box, and regular reviews of suggestions made by boarders to senior students. In addition, boarders know that at any time they can go to any senior student, member of staff, or the principal himself, with any concerns or gripes.

Boarders consistently express their love of boarding. They appreciate the benefits it brings them, academic and social, and many speak of the experience as being 'like a family'. There are plenty of opportunities to take part in enjoyable leisure activities, many of which provide physical exercise, such as football and swimming. At weekends, boarders have the chance to relax, particularly enjoying the opportunity to contact their parents and catch up with friends via social media.

The presence in the school of adult students, and members of staff who themselves were boarders, is invaluable in preparing students for moving into adulthood. Their everyday advice and support helps them to make considered career choices as well as addressing any emotional worries as they make the transition from boy to man.

The quality of care and support

Outstanding

The school's induction process for new students who come to board is effective in ensuring a smooth introduction to boarding life. Staff and senior students keep a particularly close eye on new boarders to reassure them if they have any feelings of homesickness or anxiety. There is close liaison between school and boarding staff. This enables boarders to make the best use of study time during the evenings and undoubtedly contributes to the edge in academic achievement that boarders have over day students.

Staff are consistent in showing consideration and respect for boarders, and take account of their individual circumstances, strengths and needs. One boarder commented, 'Staff teach us all brotherhood and unity.'

The school places a high priority on reaching out into the community and involving boarders in projects which benefit those in wider society. Examples include: students helping to build a house for homeless people in Liverpool; working in a food bank; and raising money for a local hospice. One boarder said, 'I went on the food distribution programme with the Salvation Army, it made me realise how lucky we are.' The school has developed a close relationship with the local Catholic diocese, giving boarders an appreciation of other faiths. During the last general election campaign, parliamentary candidates were invited to the school to speak to students. This was followed by all students voting for the party which impressed them most. All this work is important in maintaining and strengthening boarders' commitment to British values. They understand that while they follow Islamic teaching, the society in which they live has different norms which they fully respect.

Accommodation for boarders is of good quality. The school has implemented a programme of refurbishment which is part completed and has improved the comfort and privacy of boarders significantly. Food is nourishing and very plentiful. Changes are made to the menu in response to boarders' suggestions, for example, there are now fewer peas in the biryani. Boarders look forward with great anticipation to the weekend treat of takeaway meals.

Staff keep in touch with parents where necessary to update them with their children's progress. Feedback given by parents is extremely positive, with particular satisfaction in respect of boarders' happiness and safety and the quality of care provided by staff.

How well children and young people are protected **Outstanding**

All staff undergo regular safeguarding training which equips them with the skills and knowledge they need to keep boarders protected. In addition, several members of senior staff have enhanced training to undertake the role of designated safeguarding officers. This ensures that any concerns expressed by boarders, or allegations against staff, can be dealt with appropriately and sensitively.

The school's leaders have developed excellent relationships with the local safeguarding children board. They have worked positively with the local authority in situations where they have alerted social workers to concerns about a boarder's home circumstances. Of particular note is the outstanding work the school has done with the regional police counter-terrorism unit. This relationship has been in place for a number of years and goes from strength to strength. The inspectors witnessed one of the unit's regular visits to the school where officers gave a presentation to younger students about stereotyping. Officers also work with students and staff on e-safety issues, covering not just extremism and radicalisation but also cyber-bullying, internet grooming and sexual exploitation. This close cooperation is invaluable in keeping boarders safe as well as strengthening their engagement in British society.

There has never been an incident of a boarder going missing. Staff oversight ensures that boarders' whereabouts are known at all times. Should a boarder go missing, the school's policy sets out the action that staff must take, including liaison with the police.

The safety of day-to-day life for boarders is managed through the use of regularly-reviewed risk assessments. These cover activities within and outside the premises, and on school trips. Management of fire safety is good, with regular evacuation drills and testing of equipment. Senior staff undertake regular, recorded checks of the safety of the premises. However, the risk assessment of the building does not take sufficient account of patterns and trends. For example, a number of students have been hurt by trapping their fingers in doors, and there is no evaluation of why this is a problem and how it could be reduced. Senior students have an important role in protecting boarders from harm and understand their responsibilities well. One said, 'Part of our role is to help the younger ones, we ensure we keep them safe.' A boarder confirmed the effectiveness of the school's approach to safeguarding, saying, 'If you have a problem you can talk to anyone. I get a peaceful sleep. Everyone is helpful, like a family.'

Bullying is very effectively controlled. Although the supervision and constant availability of staff is important in this, of more relevance is the sense of community which boarders have. The respect and consideration which boarders have for each other means that intimidation or harassment is rare. Should it happen, boarders express total confidence that it will be dealt with promptly. This contributes to the outstanding feeling of safety which all boarders have. One said, 'Bullying? It's dealt with really well, so it's not a problem, even the smallest of incidents is treated with zero tolerance. There are no sub-groups or cliques, everyone talks to each other and no-one is excluded.'

The behaviour of boarders is excellent. The respect that boarders have for adults means that staff rarely need to use more than a quiet word to correct a student's behaviour or attitude. There is therefore no need for the use of major sanctions or physical restraint.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers Outstanding

The senior leadership team is highly experienced and has been together at the school for many years. This provides consistency and continuity of management which is highly beneficial in maintaining and improving the quality of care for boarders. The principal himself is highly respected by staff and students alike. He is completely approachable, with students frequently going to him directly if they have a suggestion or concern. One boarder said, 'He treats us like family, he cares for us.' His clarity of vision for what the school is intended to achieve for boarders and day students inspires loyalty and commitment. This maintains the school's ethos of setting the highest aspirations for students and ensuring that they go out into the world motivated to work hard and contribute to society.

The principal reports regularly to the school's trustees about the operation and effectiveness of boarding. Behaviour and safeguarding are included in this monitoring. Recommendations from previous inspections are implemented in full, as are suggestions given more informally during the course of inspections. This indicates the total commitment of the school's leadership team to make the boarding experience even better. Plans for improvement are based on what boarders say, for example, when they asked for new beds and bedside lockers. They take realistic account of resource limitations, for example, by staging the refurbishment programme as funds become available.

Staff are suitably qualified. They receive regular update training and are subject to formal six-monthly performance review. This keeps their skills and knowledge refreshed and helps them to reflect on their practice. There is good liaison with an independent schools network which keeps leaders in touch with practice developments within the sector.

The school's policies and procedures are exceptionally well maintained, reviewed every year, and take full account of statutory guidance. Records on individual boarders have also improved. For example, health plans ensure that boarder's needs in relation to their well-being are met effectively.

What inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools: the inspection framework*.

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A school where the experiences and progress of children and young people consistently exceeds the standard of good and results in sustained progress and achievement. The outcomes achieved by children and young people are outstanding and the impact the boarding/residential provision has had in supporting this progress and achieving these outcomes is clearly evidenced.
Good	A school providing effective services which exceed minimum requirements. Children and young people are protected and cared for and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.
Requires improvement	A school where there are no serious or widespread failures that result in children and young people's welfare not being safeguarded or promoted. However, the overall outcomes, experiences and progress of children and young people are not yet good.
Inadequate	A school where there are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded or if their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.

School details

Unique reference number	131389
Social care unique reference number	SC005870
DfE registration number	889/6005

This inspection 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.

Type of school	Boarding School
Number of boarders on roll	108
Gender of boarders	Boys
Age range of boarders	11 to18
Headteacher	Mr Abdus-Samad Ahmed
Date of previous boarding inspection	04/12/2012
Telephone number	01254 673105
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