

Madinatul Uloom Al Islamiya School

Summerfield, Kidderminster, Worcestershire, DY10 4BH

Inspection Dates

10 May 2017

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(2), 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii), 2(2)(e)(iii)

- At the time of the previous inspection, pupils were not able to make informed decisions about their future career aspirations because the school provided limited information and guidance. In order to address this, the school's action plan proposed the implementation of a careers guidance policy and the appointment of an independent careers adviser.
- The school now employs a specialist careers adviser. Pupils receive good quality, external, independent careers advice and support. This includes guidance for pupils on how to write a curriculum vitae (CV) and an opportunity to practise and develop interview skills. Visiting guest speakers from a broad range of occupations come into school to share their experiences and inspire the pupils. As a result, pupils have a good appreciation of different careers opportunities and are ambitious about their futures. They have developed confidence in writing CVs and personal statements. Older pupils were inspired by their trip to a careers convention at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham.
- All standards for this paragraph are met.

Paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(d), 3(f), 3(g)

- At the time of the last inspection, there were inconsistencies in the quality of teaching which led to the uneven progress that pupils made. Teachers' assessment of pupils' work was not accurate and therefore did not contribute well to planning suitably challenging work. Leaders put in place measures to rigorously monitor the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress, combined with training for teachers to improve their practice.
- Teaching has improved because of the determined efforts of leaders to tackle weaknesses in teaching. Leaders' evaluation of teaching is accurate and they know what needs to be done to improve it further. Teachers have benefited from an ongoing programme of training, carefully tailored to their needs, with a sharp focus on securing good outcomes for pupils. Leaders make frequent checks on teaching and provide constructive feedback which helps teachers to improve their practice further. This is

helping to improve pupils' rates of progress.

- The positive aspects of teaching identified at the previous inspection have been sustained and built upon. For example, inspectors observed teachers using highly skilful questioning to develop pupils' understanding. This enabled pupils to explore a topic in greater depth and make links with previous learning. Teachers give pupils time to respond to questions and expect them to explain their thinking. This results in pupils strengthening their communication and reasoning skills.
- While the quality of teaching has improved, leaders recognise that there is still further work to do to ensure that all pupils make good progress from their starting points. For example, in some mathematics lessons, there is insufficient challenge for the most able pupils. These pupils spend too much time revisiting and consolidating previous learning that they have already mastered. In humanities, there is little development of topics or themes to extend pupils' understanding. As a result, their progress is slowed and they do not achieve at the higher levels of which they are capable.
- Teachers' planning is detailed and leads to teaching which engages pupils and makes the learning explicit. However, sometimes teachers overlook gaps in pupils' knowledge. This prevents pupils from gaining a full understanding of the concept being taught. For example in geography, pupils struggled to make a comparison about the economic importance of tourism between Dubai and Kenya because their knowledge of Kenya was too limited.
- Previously, the use of resources to support good learning was an area for improvement. Leaders have invested in new resources to support teaching and learning. For example, new textbooks and novels have been purchased to meet the needs of the new English examination syllabus. Pupils use these resources well to aid their learning. Specific subject resource bases have been established to provide teachers with the necessary materials to deliver the curriculum.
- Leaders have worked hard to develop teachers' confidence and skill in making accurate assessments. However, teachers do not consistently use assessment information effectively to plan teaching. For example, teachers do not always take sufficient account of pupils' achievement during lessons. This slows progress, particularly of the most able pupils, because they do not move onto more challenging work quickly enough.
- The progress of some pupils is not yet good and teachers' use of assessment to inform next steps in learning requires some improvement.
- Therefore standards in paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(d) and 3(g) are not met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b) and Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c)

- Previously, leaders' attention to aspects of safeguarding was weak. Recruitment checks were not rigorous enough and failed to have full regard to statutory guidance. The school site had open access to visitors and there were a number of significant health and safety hazards. In addition, risk assessments for educational visits were not fit for purpose. The action plan proposed a range of changes to mitigate poor safeguarding practice and protect pupils from harm. This included a full review of all safeguarding

procedures.

- Significant improvements have been made to safeguarding arrangements since the previous inspection. Staff are more knowledgeable about safeguarding because they have received appropriate training which covers a range of topics including fire safety, issues related to health and wellbeing, and risks associated with radicalisation. Staff understand their responsibilities for reporting concerns. Pupils know that they can discuss any concerns with the designated safeguarding leader or any of the deputies.
- Proprietors now ensure that all necessary recruitment checks are completed before appointing new staff. This includes a check on a person's medical fitness.
- Leaders have ensured that safeguarding policies meet requirements and reflect the most recent guidance issued by the Secretary of State. A hard copy of the policy is immediately available to parents on request as the school does not have a website.
- Proprietors have significantly improved the security of the site. They have made a number of choices such as employing a full time security guard. All visitors are checked in at reception on arrival before being permitted to enter the school grounds. The school's perimeter is secure and pupils told inspectors that they feel much safer as a result of the improved site security arrangements.
- In accordance with the safeguarding policy, staff know they have to record any concerns they have about a pupil. Nevertheless, documentation relating to safeguarding is not always well organised and appropriately detailed. The designated safeguarding lead is aware of these shortcomings. He is proactive in making changes to systems and practices to ensure that comprehensive records will be kept for all concerns and any subsequent actions taken.
- The early stage of implementation is the reason why these standards are judged not to be met.

Paragraphs 8, 8(a), 8(b)

- These standards were met at the time of the last inspection. However, inspectors were asked to inspect the school's arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders.
- While leaders ensure that arrangements have clear regard to the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, the implementation of such arrangements is only partial. This is because inspectors found that there are a number of issues regarding health and safety which need to be addressed. For example, not all electronic devices in bedrooms have had the proper electrical tests. Boarders' personal fridges in bedrooms are not checked to ensure that food is stored at the right temperature.
- Therefore, the standards relating to paragraph 8 and 8(a) are not met. The standard relating to paragraph 8, 8(b) has been met.

Paragraphs 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 10

- These standards were met at the time of the last inspection. However, inspectors were asked to inspect the implementation of the school's behaviour policy and anti-bullying

strategy.

- Leaders have recently implemented a new system for behaviour management. This system, based on sanctions and rewards, is proving successful and is clearly understood by pupils. The policy is appropriate and followed consistently by staff. As a result, pupils behave very well in and around school, and act responsibly. They are courteous and polite to visitors.
- Leaders keep a log of behaviour incidents and sanctions. A new electronic system has recently been introduced which has led to better recording. However, leaders do not yet make use of this information to identify patterns in behaviour and measure the impact of their actions.
- Pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to learning make a positive contribution to their academic progress and social development. Teachers' positive and encouraging relationships also help to build pupils' confidence and self-esteem. The school is a calm and peaceful environment, conducive to learning. Pupils have a sense of belonging and get along well together. One pupil commented, 'We are like one big happy family.'
- The school's anti-bullying strategy works. Pupils report that while some bullying does occur, it is quickly dealt with by staff. Pupils say that leaders take action against those who bully and this results in serious sanctions.
- The school continues to meet these standards.

Paragraph 11

- Inspectors identified some significant health and safety hazards at the time of the previous inspection, including two large ponds that posed a serious risk to pupils. The action plan rightly identified the need to review the school's health and safety policy and ensure its effective implementation.
- Trustees and leaders have taken action to rectify some of the serious hazards that were identified at the last inspection. For example, the dangerous ponds have been filled in. Leaders have invested in improving the school's physical environment for both pupils and staff to make it safer. The health and safety policy has been reviewed and updated. This has helped to raise staff awareness of their responsibilities to maintain a safe and secure site. For example the policy refers to 'hazard spotting' with the expectation that staff regularly consider any potential risks and manage them appropriately.
- Despite the improvements to the policy and general safety procedures, there is still not enough vigilance on the part of staff in checking and reporting on potential hazards. For example, inspectors found an unlocked door which gave access to the boiler room. Leaders dealt with the majority of these risks before the end of the inspection.
- These instances show that while a detailed health and safety policy has been drawn up, it is not yet implemented effectively. This is because leaders are not fully monitoring the implementation of the policy which leaves pupils at risk.
- Consequently, despite notable improvements, this standard is not met.

Paragraphs 15, 16, 16(b)

- At the time of the last inspection, attendance registers were not completed correctly. Inspectors also found that leaders were not ensuring effective implementation of the school's risk assessment policy. The school's action plan took into account both of these failings.
- The school's admissions and attendance registers are now correctly completed and up-to-date. Teachers use the appropriate Department for Education attendance codes when recording pupils' attendance and absence.
- Leaders have reviewed and updated the educational trips policy and now make thorough risk assessments for all educational visits and leisure activities before they take place. Teachers carry out risk assessments in lessons, for example in science when using equipment, which ensure that identified hazards are reduced.
- All standards for these paragraphs are met.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Paragraphs 18(2), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(3)

- At the time of the previous inspection, leaders were not carrying out all pre-employment checks on new staff. Medical fitness checks did not take place for any staff.
- Senior leaders now ensure that they take appropriate measures to reduce the risk of unsuitable people working with children or young people. The single central record is in place and contains all the required information. Medical fitness checks have been completed for all staff.
- All of the standards for this paragraph are met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 25, 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b)

- This standard was not met at the previous inspection. This was due to the poor condition of some of the accommodation, no provision for hot water in the toilet and ablution areas, and a lack of access to drinking water facilities.
- Trustees have continued to invest in modernising the school buildings and accommodation blocks. Areas of the school have been painted which makes it a brighter environment. There is a major building programme underway which will bring greater enhancements to the school premises.
- Pupils have access to drinking water and taps are clearly marked to show water which is suitable for drinking. While there is access to drinking water, pupils would benefit from more drinking water outlets. Toilet and ablution areas now have an adequate supply of hot and cold water.
- All of the standards for these paragraphs are met.

Paragraph 30

- This standard was not met at the previous inspection because the accommodation did not meet the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. Some of the pupils' bedrooms were in a poor state of repair with broken windows, damp conditions and a

general lack of comfort and homeliness.

- Since this time, the trustees have made significant improvements to the boarding accommodation. The new roof has prevented leaks and resolved the damp issue, and the internal walls have been painted in brighter colours. Boarders appreciate the work that has been carried out and say that the environment is better.
- This standard is met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)

- Previously, leaders did not demonstrate that they had the knowledge and understanding to ensure that the independent school standards were met. The school's overall effectiveness was judged inadequate. Leaders were overgenerous in their evaluations and therefore had not been effective in taking the necessary action to improve the school and outcomes for pupils.
- Collectively, the trustees and headteacher provide effective leadership which is helping the school to improve. Senior leaders have successfully strengthened their own leadership skills, drawing on the expertise of external consultants. They have also been highly focused on providing quality support for staff in improving the quality of teaching and learning. The monitoring of teaching has improved considerably. Senior leaders show a good understanding of effective teaching and learning and use this knowledge well to develop expertise in other staff.
- Leaders have introduced new effective pastoral systems to cater for the personal and social needs of pupils. Pupils value the time they spend with pastoral teachers who understand how they can provide help and support if pupils are troubled in any way.
- Leaders are trying to broaden the pupils' experience of the wider community. For example, pupils participated in an interfaith football competition and achieved success. Trustees recognise that there is still more work to do and are actively encouraging school leaders to look for opportunities to develop better community links.
- The trustees provide strong direction. They have high expectations and hold leaders to account for pupils' progress. The trustees' annual strategic plan is carefully focused on the right priority areas to ensure that the school continues to improve. Trustees understand the needs of school because they visit the school and check on its work. Their priorities are now much more focused on pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders have a strong understanding of the independent school standards. They have compiled a comprehensive system of evidence collection to demonstrate that the action plan has been implemented effectively. They seek feedback and comments from pupils on any changes to provision, and use this information to evaluate their work.
- Trustees and leaders have acted swiftly and determinedly to tackle the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. Leaders have successfully implemented a wide range of actions that have either begun to resolve, or have fully addressed, many of the previous failings. As a result, several of the standards that were unmet at the last inspection have now been met. However, leaders recognise that there is still some refinement needed before this standard is met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain un-met at this inspection

- Part 1, paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(d) and 3(g)
- Part 3, paragraph 7, 7(a), 11
- Part 8, paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(b)

Standards that were met at the previous inspection, but are now judged to not be met at this inspection

- Part 3, paragraph 8, 8(a)

The school now meets the following independent school standards

- Part 1, paragraph 2(2), 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii), 2(2)(e)(iii), paragraph 3(f)
- Part 3, paragraph 7(b), 15, 16, 16(b), 8(b)
- Part 4, paragraph 18(2), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(3)
- Part 5, paragraph 25, 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b)
- Part 8, paragraph 34(1)(a)

School Details

Unique reference number	117044
DfE registration number	885/6031
Inspection number	10025762

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, 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.

Type of school	Muslim residential
School status	Independent boarding school
Age range of pupils	11 to 24
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	32
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Madinatul Uloom Al Islamiya Board of Trustees
Chair	Mr M Gangat
Headteacher	Mr A Hans
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,500
Telephone number	01562 66894
Website	None
Email address	headteacher@madinatul-uloom.org
Date of previous standard inspection	2–4 February 2016

Information about this school

- Madinatul Uloom Al Islamiya is an independent boarding and day school for Muslim boys and young men between 11 and 24. The school was established in 1988. Pupils attend from all areas of the country and some from overseas.
- There are 240 pupils on roll, 225 of whom are boarders.
- There are no pupils who have an education, health and care plan or statement of special

educational needs.

- The proprietorial board consists of eight trustees.
- The school offers secular and Islamic education.
- The school does not use any alternative educational provision for its pupils.
- The school does not have a website.

Information about this inspection

- This unannounced inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection. The Department for Education also instructed inspectors to inspect paragraphs 9 and 10 of the independent school standards.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection since the school was judged inadequate at the standard inspection in February 2016.
- The school submitted an action plan outlining its proposals to address the unmet standards. This action plan was evaluated in August 2016. The proposed action plan was judged 'requires improvement'.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including: information on current pupils' outcomes; checks made on staff's suitability to work with children; school policies; risk assessments; documents relating to attendance; monitoring of teaching records; and action plans.
- Inspectors visited classrooms, accommodation blocks and communal areas. They observed pupils' learning and behaviour.
- The views of pupils were considered through informal discussions.
- Inspectors held discussions with the trustees, the headteacher and other senior leaders.
- A boarding school regulatory re-inspection was conducted at the same time as this progress monitoring inspection. A separate report has been published.

Inspection team

Tim Hill, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sandy Hayes	Her Majesty's Inspector

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