

Ummid Independent School

The Old Sunday School, Bake Street, Bradford BD7 3EX

Inspection dates

9–11 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and managers at the school do not currently have an accurate view of the effectiveness of the school. Some staff are not clear about their roles and responsibilities and, as a result, do not carry out the duties expected of them.
- Safeguarding checks required to ensure that adults are suitable to work in school have not been carried out. Currently there are insufficient staff who have been trained in first aid to cover all three school sites. Both of these lapses pose a risk to pupils' health and welfare.
- The board of trustees has not offered sufficient challenge to school leaders. Trustees have, until recently, lacked a clear understanding of the effectiveness of the school. This has contributed considerably to the decline since the previous inspection.
- The curriculum does not meet the requirements of the independent school standards. Due to staff shortages, the number of subjects on the curriculum has been reduced. At the time of the inspection, some pupils who attend the school's Himmat provision full time were only taught mathematics and English.
- School leaders have failed to carry out effective checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, inadequate teaching has continued in areas of the school.
- Outcomes for pupils are inadequate overall. Staff do not always have the depth of knowledge and understanding required to identify pupils' starting points accurately. This leads to pupils being offered work which is too easy or repetitive.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils make stronger progress at the Junction site where expectations of behaviour and academic progress are higher.
- The school offers pupils diverse and exciting opportunities outside the classroom

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- As a matter of urgency, improve the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements by making sure that:
 - all required checks are undertaken to ensure that the recruitment of staff is undertaken safely and meets the Department for Education requirements
 - all staff receive essential safeguarding training, including first aid, in order that there are sufficient first-aid trained staff on each site
 - record-keeping is improved so that it is of a consistently high standard across the school, including the logging of accidents and incidents of pupils' difficult behaviour
 - attendance registers are completed accurately and not in advance of the current date
 - the admissions register accurately logs the destinations of all pupils who have left the school so that it is clear what they went on to do
 - actions are taken to address drug-taking and smoking among pupils who attend the Himmat site
 - fire safety evacuation procedures are regularly carried out across all areas of the school.
- Rapidly improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance by:
 - defining roles and responsibilities so that staff are clear who their leaders and managers are and what roles they play
 - developing effective systems to assure the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in order to speed up improvement in outcomes for pupils
 - more closely monitoring the application of the behaviour management system across the school so that all staff and pupils understand and implement the school's expectations of pupils' behaviour
 - carrying out an urgent review of the curriculum in order to increase the number of subjects offered in line with the requirements of the independent school standards.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and increase the progress made by all pupils by making sure that:
 - a wider range of evidence is taken into account when assessing pupils' abilities when they first arrive in school, so that staff have a clearer understanding of pupils' abilities and ensure that work set is not too easy
 - staff undertaking teaching roles, particularly on the Himmat site, have much higher expectations of what pupils can achieve in the time available, and provide an atmosphere more conducive to learning in the classroom
 - pupils' mathematical and English skills are improved at a fast pace in order that they may start to catch up with peers nationally.
- Improve pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour at the Himmat site by ensuring that

staff:

- set clear boundaries for pupils’ behaviour both inside and outside the classroom
- ensure that the school’s behaviour management system is applied rigorously and consistently
- more closely monitor pupils’ behaviour during break and lunchtimes to ensure that they do not return to the classroom under the influence of drugs.

The school must meet the following independent school standards

- The proprietor must ensure that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, provides for the matters specified in subparagraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively and takes into account the needs of pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and does not undermine fundamental British values. This must also ensure that all pupils are given the opportunity to learn and make progress and reflect standards. (2(1), (2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(h))
- The proprietor must ensure that teaching in school enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught, and fosters in pupils self-motivation and the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves. It must be delivered through well-planned lessons using effective teaching methods and by staff who have an understanding of pupils’ prior attainment, manage class time effectively and have good subject knowledge. Effective teaching and learning must also be supported by effective use of a range of classroom resources and a framework must be in place which enables staff to use assessment to plan pupils’ future work. (3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h))
- The proprietor must ensure that the welfare and safety of pupils at the school are safeguarded and protected by ensuring that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that so far as is reasonably practical, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured. (7, 7(a), 7(b))
- The proprietor must ensure that a written behaviour policy is drawn up that, among other matters, sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupil misbehaviour. The policy must be implemented effectively and a record must be kept of the sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour. (9, 9(b), 9(c))
- The proprietor must ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005¹ and that first aid is administered in a timely and competent manner by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written first-aid policy. The proprietor must also ensure that an admission and attendance register, maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006², is effectively kept. (12, 13, 15)
- The proprietor must ensure that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy and that appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified. (16, 16(a),

¹ S.I. 2005/1541, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.

² S.I. 2006/1751, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.

16(b)

- The proprietor must ensure that for members of staff no person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction. (18(2), 18(2)(b))
- The proprietor must ensure that checks were made to establish whether members of staff are subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction. (21(1), (3), 21(3)(a) 21(3)(a)(iii))
- The proprietors must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibility demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are consistently met and actively promote the well-being of pupils. (34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c))

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- The leadership and management of the school are inadequate because leaders, managers and the board of trustees have not been effective in putting in place systems which safeguard and protect the health and welfare of pupils and which meet the independent school standards.
- There is an inconsistency of approach in the leadership and management in each of the three sites. For example, at the Junction site where there is a close working partnership between the school and the local authority, many of the requirements of the independent school standards are met. Teaching and learning are clearly established and pupils re-engage with learning and start to make progress. However, on the Himmat site, there is a lack of clear and effective leadership. As a result, many systems are not securely in place and pupils' behaviour is often unregulated and sometimes out of control. Academic progress is poor.
- Systems in place to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are weak and are not consistently followed. This results in poor-quality teaching and learning continuing without check. At different times in the recent past, leaders have attempted to implement more effective systems. However, these systems have been unsupported by senior leaders and as a result they have been abandoned and poor practice has continued unchecked.
- School leaders lack accuracy in their judgement of the school's overall effectiveness. Plans for improvement and self-evaluation do not acknowledge the school's current position and as a result are inaccurate. This is largely because of a lack of communication between senior leaders and the board of trustees. For example, the principal has at times been overwhelmed by the tasks assigned to her. Evidence seen at the time of the inspection confirmed that she had made her concerns about the impact of the reduction in staff numbers, and the lack of suitably qualified staff, known in writing to other senior leaders. However, no action was taken and the decline in standards has continued.
- The roles and responsibilities of staff and leaders are not clearly defined particularly on the Himmat site. This leads to confusion and a lack of effective leadership and management structure. For example, when the lead inspector asked who was responsible for the day-to-day leadership of the Himmat site, it became clear that there was a lack of clarity around roles and responsibilities.
- The curriculum is inadequate, particularly for pupils who remain at the school for protracted periods of time and do not attend other provision. For example, at the time of the inspection, pupils who attend the Himmat provision were only taught English and mathematics. Other accredited courses in subjects, such as basic cooking skills and sport, had been largely abandoned due to staffing shortages. This is a breach of the independent school standards and means that pupils of all abilities leave with few qualifications or accreditations.
- The school provides pupils with a range of activities which develop their spiritual, moral and social skills. Annual trips to the Isle of Mull and other destinations in Scotland and beyond take place. The outdoor education that these trips provide develops pupils' self-esteem, self-reliance and team-building.

Governance

- Governance at the school is inadequate.
- The board of trustees has only recently been made aware of the problems the school faces currently. However, the involvement of trustees with the school over time has not been sufficient to offer effective support or challenge to senior leaders to bring about a halt to the decline in standards.
- Changes in the way the local authority places pupils have led to a dip in pupil numbers. This has led to a reduction in staff numbers. While trustees have been aware of the financial implications of these external actions on the school, they have not sought to investigate the impact on the day-to-day running of the school. Instead, they have relied entirely on feedback from senior leaders.
- The chair of the board of trustees has worked hard in the short intervening space of time since trustees were made aware of the current situation to gather as much information as possible. He has begun, with the help of the principal, to put in place an improvement plan. However, this is at a very early stage of development.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Required checks on recruited staff have not been carried out and recorded on the single central register because senior leaders were not aware of the current Department for Education requirements.
- While some staff have attended first-aid training, insufficient numbers of staff are trained to cover all three school sites.
- The recording of safeguarding incidents, including accidents, injuries and pupils' difficult behaviour, particularly on the Himmat site, is inconsistent and of inadequate quality. Incidents are not effectively investigated and there is often little reflection on how to prevent the incident recurring.
- Attendance registers are not always kept to the required standard and therefore do not always reflect an accurate record of pupils' attendance. For example, a register on the Himmat site was found to have been filled in for a pupil in advance of the current date.
- The recording of pupils' destinations, once they leave the school, in the school's admissions register is inconsistent. At the start of the inspection, the destinations of 20 pupils were missing from last year's register and 27 from the year before. These anomalies were rectified by the end of the inspection. However, they reflected unsafe practice overall.
- Required procedures in the event of a fire are not always consistently adhered to across the school. For example, evacuation procedures for pupils have not been tested at the Junction site since the beginning of the school year. Information provided by the local authority during annual safety checks has not been shared with the school. As a result, required information held by the school on fire risks was 10 years out of date and may have posed a hazard to pupils' safety and welfare in the event of a fire.
- The school has a safeguarding policy which meets current legislative requirements. It is

published on the school's website. However, it is not always adhered to in all areas of the school, demonstrating clearly the lack of a consistent and safe culture of safeguarding within the school.

- The Himmat project also runs services which support young people and their families. The close working links with staff from the 'Families First' project has benefited pupils at the school, enabling them and their families to receive support and guidance.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The teaching, learning and assessment are inadequate because there is too much variation in quality across the school and too much is of poor quality.
- Staff often lack the skills to assess accurately pupils' starting points, relying too much on the ineffective use of an online scheme to measure pupils' previous attainment. As a result, pupils are often assessed as having a very low baseline of previous knowledge and skills. Future work, generated by the same scheme, is then set for too low a level. This often leads to pupils working for long periods of time on tasks which are below and sometimes well below their capabilities. This slows their progress over time.
- Planning for learning is inconsistent. In some areas of the school it is rudimentary and lacks focus. This was clearly observed during the inspection at the start of the school day when pupils discussed current affairs. In some areas of the school, pupils looked at differing perspectives of the forthcoming election and were observed voicing their opinions clearly and succinctly, making an effective contribution to their understanding of fundamental British values. In other areas, pupils were given an unplanned subject which was of no interest to them and they quickly became restless and behaviour dipped.
- The subject knowledge of staff in some areas of the provision is weak. Learning observed during the inspection reflected this, particularly on the Himmat site. For example, at the start of the school day, pupils discuss a current affairs issue. This was observed by the inspection team on both the Himmat and the Ummid sites. During the observation made on the Himmat site, pupils were not engaged because staff did not have a clear understanding of the subject nor clear objectives for learning. Work in files also confirmed this. However, on the Junction site, staff have good subject knowledge and this is reflected in the pupils' progress from their starting points.
- Staff expectations of pupils' behaviour in the classroom also vary across the school. On the Ummid site, purposeful learning is encouraged and clear boundaries are set to which pupils largely adhere. Expectations of pupils' behaviour and progress at the Junction site are higher still, and work set by the teacher matches pupils' needs sufficiently well that the vast majority make progress during the short time they attend. However, expectations of pupils' behaviour and progress are much lower at the Himmat site where pupils often complete little work in lessons and lack a clear focus on learning, preferring to play pool and football rather than learn.
- Staff work closely together across the school and teamwork can clearly be seen even where teaching, learning and assessment are weak.
- Teaching at the Junction site demonstrates a good understanding of the needs of pupils and ensures that work set meets their needs well. This enables pupils to re-engage with learning and to make progress during the short time they attend the provision.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate because leaders and managers and members of the board of trustees have not ensured that all the required safeguarding checks are securely in place. This has put pupils' welfare at risk and leaders cannot be assured of pupils' safety.
- Pupils spoken to said that they enjoy coming to school. They also commented that they feel safe and recalled how, through information technology lessons, they have learned how to keep safe on the internet.
- The personal development and behaviour of pupils on the Himmat site remains a concern. Pupils continue to make unsafe choices both inside and outside school. Staff have little control over their behaviour and the promotion of their well-being and welfare is inadequate.
- Often pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence improve when they join the school. Those who attend the Junction site feel that they are being offered a fresh start. This enables them to focus on improving their attitudes and behaviour in the classroom. As a result, the vast majority make a successful transition to a new school.
- Those who remain at school longer at the main Ummid site are offered careers guidance which enables them to make effective choices for their future. However, because the curriculum is so narrow, this reduces their choice of options in college and the workplace.
- Pupils spoken to on the Ummid and Junction sites feel that they encounter little or no bullying behaviour because of the small numbers of pupils and the vigilance of staff. It was not possible to gain a view on this issue from pupils on the Himmat site.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- The school does not currently have a written behaviour policy. Staff manage pupils' behaviour inconsistently across the school.
- Some pupils demonstrated positive attitudes to school. Behaviour records kept by the school reflect an improvement in their behaviour as they settle into school routines. However, too many pupils do not behave well. For example, they choose to start to roll cigarettes in lessons and smoke in derelict cars at lunch and breaktimes. Sometimes they arrive at school under the influence of drugs and this further increases their risk-taking behaviour.
- The attendance of pupils at the Junction site improves overall during their time at the provision. The attendance of pupils at the Ummid site also improves but for fewer pupils. Staff follow up absence but systems currently in place lack rigour due to low staffing levels. As a result, attendance overall is lower than it should be.
- Pupils' punctuality on the Himmat site is poor and staff actions have brought about little improvement. Attendance registers are kept but are not always completed accurately on this site. As a result, attendance data is inaccurate.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Overall, too many pupils make too little progress from their starting points in English and mathematics. Work in pupils' files reflects this.
- Pupils often remain in school for longer periods than was originally anticipated. Some pupils stay for as long as two years. The curriculum currently offered does not permit them to study subjects such as history and geography, science and modern foreign languages regularly. This restricted curriculum does not meet the requirements of the independent school standards and leads to limited progress for pupils.
- The school does not currently track the progress of groups of pupils, including the most able. Because each pupil works on an individual work programme, it is difficult to assess the progress of this group. However, work in folders shows that work set lacks challenge overall and this decreases the progress of these pupils.
- Pupils who attend the Junction site make stronger progress. This is because the work set more accurately matches their needs.
- Last year, pupils left with a wider range of accreditations than current pupils are targeted to reach. The majority transferred to college. However, at the time of the inspection, it was unclear how many remained in their placements.

School details

Unique reference number	139901
DfE registration number	380/6008
Inspection number	10033922

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	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	31
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mr R U Khan
Chair	Richard Smith
Headteacher	Joanne Watts
Annual fees (day pupils)	£50–£185 daily
Telephone number	01274 577 866
Website	www.himmat.sch/org
Email address	jo@himmat.org
Date of previous inspection	14–15 May 2014

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the numbers of pupils attending the school has dropped. This has led to the closure of two of the school's sites and a decrease in the number of staff employed by the school.
- The school is currently located on three sites. The Ummid site is located in Bradford and houses the school's main office. Pupils who attend this site are largely from the city of Bradford and have been permanently excluded from their mainstream schools. The majority are boys. The length of their stay at the school varies but at the time of the inspection some pupils had attended for more than two years. Current pupils are from

Years 8, 9, 10 and 11.

- The Junction site caters for the needs of pupils who have been excluded from mainstream schools and are waiting to start at a new secondary school. The school's only qualified teacher is based at the site and has a very close liaison with the local authority, which manages the allocation of pupils.
- The Himmat site is based in the centre of Halifax. It meets the needs of pupils who have been excluded from mainstream schools in the Halifax area. Pupils who attend are predominantly referred by the Phoenix pupil referral unit. Currently pupils who attend are from Years 9, 10 and 11.
- At the time of the inspection, the principal was in overall charge of the school, supported by the chair of the board of trustees.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed learning in classrooms across the school. They were accompanied by senior leaders for some of the observations.
- Inspectors examined pupils' work and school assessment information.
- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of documentation including the school's curriculum policy and schemes of work, the complaints policy and other documents required to check compliance with the independent school standards.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff and the chair of the board of trustees. Informal discussions were undertaken with pupils.
- No responses were received from parents and carers to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

Marian Thomas, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Robert Jones

Ofsted Inspector

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