

**MADINATUL ULOOM AL ISLAMIYA
BUTTS LANE
SUMMERFIELD
KIDDERMINSTER
DY10 4BH**

Reporting inspector: Mrs M A Buckingham HMI

Dates of Inspection: 1-3 June 1998

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Information about the school

Type of school	Muslim, Boarding
Type of control	Independent
Age range of pupils	11-21
Gender of pupils	Male
Number on roll	181 (59 are over 16)
Fees	£1,500 per annum
School address	Butts Lane Summerfield Kidderminster DY10 4BH
Telephone number	01562 66894
Fax number	01562 66894
Appropriate authority	Trustees
Name of chair of trustees	Mr Naushad Abdul Aziz
Headteacher	During the inspection, Mr Ahmed Patas was appointed as the full-time headteacher

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This list of contents forms the specification as sent to the headteacher prior to the inspection.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE INSPECTION

1. The inspection was carried out in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Employment of the school's suitability for registration as an independent school under the Education Act 1996. To this end, the report¹ concentrates on those aspects of the school relevant to that purpose. No subjects of the curriculum are reported on in detail.

2. Madinatul Uloom Al Islamiya is provisionally registered with the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE). Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) have visited the school on a number of occasions for purposes of registration and have had serious concerns. Worcestershire Social Services (SSD) has also visited the school under the Children Act 1989, which is primarily concerned with the welfare of pupils. It too expressed worries about aspects of the provision. Following the last visit by HMI in September 1997, standards in a number of areas of the school had deteriorated to such an extent that the DfEE sent a strong official letter to the school. This report indicates where progress in these, and other matters, has been made and states what still needs to be done to bring the school to an acceptable standard.

MAIN FINDINGS

3. Standards in the Islamic theological subjects taught in Madrasah are good and pupils progress well. In English and science some pupils attain at a level expected nationally, but the attainment of a significant minority is well below average. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is low for all but the abler boys, who attain close to the level of national expectations. Many pupils make insufficient progress and underachieve.

4. Teaching, other than in mathematics, is generally sound. Mathematics lessons were supervised by a non-specialist teacher. The major weakness in the teaching is that insufficient attention is given to ensuring the work matches the range of pupils' abilities in each group; this is of particular concern for lower attaining pupils. Provision is poor for pupils who are weak in English.

5. All pupils study theology and other Islamic courses and are taught English, mathematics, science, Urdu, physical education (PE) and Islamic studies in the afternoon. By national standards the curriculum is narrow, but boys are entered for public examinations in four of the six subjects taught in the afternoon. There are no detailed schemes of work for these subjects. Parents do not receive regular written reports on their son's progress in any subject; a cause of concern of some who responded to the parents' questionnaire sent out before the inspection.

6. Resources are inadequate. Despite recent improvements to provide textbooks in English, mathematics and science, on occasions pupils still have to share. Equipment for practical work is very limited indeed. The Islamic library is good and the English language library is now well organised and much improved. Except for PE, there are sufficient appropriately qualified teachers, but no programme of in-service training to support them. Staff with responsibility for boarding have received no training for

¹ The nomenclature used throughout is that as described by the school; Madrasah in the morning and School in the afternoon.

their duties.

7. The leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory. There is a willingness to improve, but an inability to move forward in several areas at once and to take the necessary action promptly. There is no school development plan. During the inspection a new full-time headteacher was appointed.

8. The school has established a positive Islamic ethos. The boys are respectful, courteous and well behaved.

9. The premises are suitable to be a school. The location and grounds are very pleasant. There are a number of health and safety matters that require urgent attention. The accommodation for lessons is generally satisfactory. The boarding accommodation has much improved since the last HMI visit and is now of a generally acceptable standard. Work is continuing to improve the ablution and toilet facilities. An area designated as a science laboratory is partly completed.

10. A number of the required procedures and policies to safeguard and promote pupils' welfare are in draft, but have not yet been fully implemented. The school is working with Worcestershire SSD to comply with the requirements of the Children Act 1989.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

11. To make further improvements and raise standards in the education provided and in pupils' attainment, the trustees, headteacher and staff need to take action on the matters raised in this report, but especially they will need to:

- improve the management of the school by producing and implementing a school development plan for the short and long term, which sets out clearly what action is required to manage the school more effectively;
- make proper provision for those pupils who are weak in English;
- review the teaching and implement teaching methods that meet the needs of pupils of all abilities;
- devise and implement schemes of work and a rigorous system of assessment for each pupil, both on entry and regularly in all subjects, to inform planning and help raise standards;
- improve the resources for subjects taught.

Also, the trustees and headteacher must:

- attend urgently to the health and safety hazards identified in the section on accommodation in this report;
- comply with the recommendations from Worcestershire SSD in respect of the Children Act

1989, as set out in the report sent to the school by SSD.

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

12. Madinatul Uloom Al Islamiya is an independent Islamic boys' boarding school. It is housed in a former teacher training college in the countryside, about four miles south west of Kidderminster in Worcestershire. At the time of the inspection there were 181 boys and young men between the ages of 11 and 21 on the roll, all of whom are full termly boarders.

13. The main aim of the school is to give boys a thorough training culminating in a degree in Islamic theology awarded by the school after six years of study. Students may also gain certification in the Art and Science of the Recitation of the Holy Qu'ran and the Memorisation of the Holy Qu'ran. This will enable pupils to become teachers in Islamic institutions and Imams. This aspect of the educational provision is known as Madrasah in the school. Many of the Madrasah teachers have graduated in this way from Darul Uloom Alarabiya Al Islamiya, in Bury. Other subjects are taught in the afternoon and include English, mathematics, science, Urdu, Islamic studies and PE. This part of the curriculum is called 'School'. The older students, that is those over 16, continue with Madrasah studies in the afternoon.

14. The vast majority of pupils are British Muslims, speaking mainly Bengali or Gujarati as well as English, with homes throughout the United Kingdom; for example, in Birmingham, London, Newcastle, Glasgow and Cardiff. All boys learn Urdu and Arabic to enable them to read the Holy Qu'ran and a variety of other texts for studying Islamic theology. Pupils have a wide range of abilities and a major issue for the school is how to provide for their diverse needs, particularly to ensure that all pupils become fluent in the English language.

Key indicators

The school does not enter boys for the National Tests in Year 9, nor are any other tests used on entry. Pupils in Year 11 and some over 16 years old are entered for GCSE. The results for 1997 are given here:

Urdu: 21 entrants — 28.6% of entrants grade A; 66.7% grades A to C; four absentees.
There are no national figures for Urdu.

English: 26 entrants — no A* to B grades; 1 grade C; 73% of entrants gained a graded result A to G; seven absentees.
National figures are available for maintained secondary schools and they show 52% of 15 year olds gained grades A to C and 97% gained a graded result A* to G.*

Mathematics: 30 entrants — entry at three different tiers (higher 5, intermediate 12, foundation 13); 14% of the entrants gained grades B or C. Three pupils who entered intermediate level were ungraded; 63% of entrants gained a graded result; seven absentees.
National figures are available for maintained secondary schools and they show 43% of 15 year olds gained grade A to C and 95% gained a graded result, A* to G.*

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

	%
Very good or better	19
Satisfactory or better	58
Less than satisfactory	23*

*The majority of these were the supervised mathematics lessons.

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

15. There are no formal stated national criteria against which to assess the level achieved in many areas studied in the Madrasah courses. However, standards are judged to be good in Islamic theology and often very good in Tajweed (Q'uaranic recitation) and Tahfeez (Q'uaranic memorisation). Standards are good in Urdu and satisfactory in Islamic studies (RE) and Arabic. Pupils make good progress in speaking, reading and writing Urdu and can satisfactorily converse and exchange opinions in Arabic. Progress for most pupils in Islamic studies is satisfactory, but some younger pupils do not always show sufficient understanding when questioned.

16. Attainment in English varies very much within each class. In Year 7 to Year 10, some boys are achieving levels of writing and reading expected for their age. These pupils write interesting stories with satisfactory spelling and grammar, set out letters appropriately and answer comprehension or grammar exercises correctly with legible handwriting and neat presentation. Their reading is generally accurate, reasonably fluent, but lacks expression of character. Other pupils achieve below average standards, but they make some progress in writing and reading. Boys, in general, are not fluent English speakers. In each class, a significant minority of pupils' attainment is well below average in all aspects of English. Some of these boys are newly arrived at the school and may have had breaks in their primary education; others are new to the English language. For whatever reason, proper provision must be made for these pupils to help them learn English, either for the first time or to improve standards so that they can make much more progress, both in English lessons and across the school curriculum.

17. Attainment in mathematics is variable, but for a substantial number of pupils it is too low. In Year 7 and Year 8 much work is at a very low level, and much has been covered already by some pupils in their primary schools. In the work seen in class many pupils were extremely slow to complete simple addition. Work seen in folders covered a broader range, but much was repetitive arithmetic that did not allow boys to progress.

18. From Year 9 onwards, mathematical attainment by the abler pupils is mostly sound and appropriate for their age. However, in each year there remains a substantial minority of pupils whose knowledge and understanding are low. Several pupils of all ages are very weak in number knowledge and this impedes their progress. Others, however, are able to work quickly because of their good mental arithmetic.

19. Attainment in science is low. The great majority of pupils attain below the average level expected for their age. The work in pupils' files covers a wide and appropriate range of science at levels that are suited to the age of the pupils. However, the notes are largely copied from those of the teacher or from a book. The extent to which pupils learn and understand this information is extremely variable. In the lessons seen only a small number of pupils demonstrated that they had understood the science. In Year 9, a few boys gave good oral presentations of the processes and explanation of the production of iron and steel from ores.

20. Pupils whose English is weak or who have recently joined the school show very little understanding of the work. Pupils do not ask questions to further their own understanding and need encouragement to develop a sense of enquiry. In this respect they are considerably disadvantaged by the lack of practical work. Although some scientific principles are demonstrated to them, they are unable, because of the lack of suitable resources and accommodation, to test scientific principles or draw their own conclusions from evidence. Practical skills are therefore grossly underdeveloped.

21. During the inspection it was only possible to see one lesson of PE. Lessons are not taught by specialists, whoever is available covers the lesson. Although the game of football was enjoyed by the boys, the lack of proper specialist teaching and a programme of work means little progress is made in a wider range of skills. The pupils show good sportsmanship and some have good co-ordination.

22. In 1997, there were over 20 GCSE entries in just three subjects; Urdu, English and mathematics. The results in Urdu were good, with over one quarter of the candidates gaining grade A and two thirds at least grade C. The results in mathematics and English were well below levels achieved nationally by 15 year olds in maintained secondary schools. This was significant in English where only one candidate gained a grade C and none at grade A*, A or B. If pupils are capable of attaining so well in Urdu many should be capable of higher achievement in other GCSE subjects. Absenteeism from GCSE examinations represents a significant problem for the school: in the three subjects examined between 4-7 candidates were absent.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

23. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Boys are respectful and courteous to adults and generally get on well together. In lessons, boys do what is required of them, but rarely ask questions or enter into debate, other than in some Islamic theology lessons. In lessons towards the end of the afternoon some boys were tired and found concentration difficult.

24. The school develops a positive Islamic ethos and understanding of morality, but wider cultural development receives little attention. For example, there is very little Islamic art on display and there are no art lessons or extra-curricular activities in this area. Such provision would help the boys to appreciate the very rich tradition of Islamic art and architecture.

25. Older students play an important role in helping younger boys; for example, in Nasihat, as group leaders. This provides discussion and instruction on a wide range of topics which help boys' personal development. The older students take further responsibility and organise the library, laundry and tuck shop well. These students show maturity in leading the five daily prayers and often give an address at the school's Friday prayers. On completion of the memorisation of the Holy Qu'ran all older students are held in such regard that they are invited to lead prayers at various local mosques, up and down the country; for example, in Worcester, Telford, Southampton, London and Newcastle upon Tyne.

Attendance

26. Although all boys are boarders, registers are taken in each lesson, morning and afternoon. The relatively high proportion of absentees in GCSE examinations is a cause for concern. An admission register is kept on a database and printed out as is required.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

27. The quality of teaching in the majority of lessons, both in Madrasah and school, was satisfactory. In the Hifz and Tajweed classes seen it was judged to be good. Teachers' subject knowledge in English, science and Islamic theology is sound. Each lesson has a clear purpose and proceeds at a steady pace, making use of the available time. In English lessons question and answer techniques are used well to check pupils' factual knowledge, but less often to give pupils an opportunity to express an opinion about the text and speak at length. In science, instruction on a topic is often well done but there is a lack of the necessary teaching strategies to test pupils real understanding.

28. In the better lessons some pupils are encouraged to report orally the major points covered in the lesson. English teachers provide good role models of the spoken language. However, pupils lack opportunities in all subjects to practice speaking English for different purposes. They lack experience of presenting an argument for debate and giving explanations in formal and informal contexts. The example of weekly reading aloud in English lessons, in Key Stage 3, could be usefully extended to other areas, so that pupils have more opportunity to gain confidence and improve their reading.

29. A major weakness in the teaching is that inadequate attention is given to the needs of pupils of different abilities; the pace and demands of the work are better suited to the abler pupils. Insufficient support is given to lower attainers and to those whose understanding of English is weak. The predominant method is to work with the whole group, setting the same task and requiring pupils to work individually. While this is appropriate for some of the work, alternative methods and materials are required to better suit the varying needs and aptitudes of pupils. The limited range of resources is a hinderance to providing materials for pupils of different abilities.

30. The school's mathematics teacher was absent throughout the inspection, as he was taking Postgraduate Certificate in Education examinations. No formal teaching of mathematics was seen during the inspection and each class was supervised by a non-specialist teacher. The pupils worked through exercises set by their usual mathematics teacher. The non-specialist supervisor ensured that pupils had the correct text and papers to work from, and on a few occasions circulated to check that they were on task. However, the supervisor did not intervene in the learning and did not answer any of the pupils' questions about the mathematics. It is entirely unsatisfactory that pupils have not had access for some time to specialist mathematics teaching.

31. No homework was set during afternoon School lessons. This is unsatisfactory. Boys have two hours prep each evening, but this is used for revision and preparation for work in Madrasah. Work for other subjects has to be done in their free time. A regular supervised session each evening should be set aside for afternoon School subject homework.

The curriculum and assessment

32. The aims of the school, as presently set out in the recently compiled staff handbook, provide a helpful baseline by which to evaluate the curriculum.

33. For pupils in Key Stages 3 (Years 7-9) and 4 (Years 10-11) the curriculum is divided into two strands. In the mornings the Madrasah focuses on Islamic theology and memorisation and recitation of the Holy Qu'ran. Within the Madrasah appropriate attention is given to the study of religious aspects, including literature, Islamic history and classical Arabic. Pupils study jurisprudence and take a full part in debate. Post-16 students continue with Madrasah through the afternoon. The curriculum enables pupils to attain high levels of spiritual, moral and Islamic awareness. In this the school is achieving some of its aims.

34. In the afternoons, the School curriculum for under 16s is too narrow in national terms. The timetable is organised to cover English, mathematics, science, PE, Urdu as a modern foreign language and Islamic studies. These six subjects are studied by all year groups, except for Year 11, which has no PE. English literature GCSE is studied in Year 11. The time given to the subjects varies slightly in each year group, but for English, mathematics and science it is a little less than that found in most schools nationally. Insufficient time is devoted to PE and the lack of practical work in science narrows the focus of the work.

35. However, no attention is given to the creative arts or technology. In particular the lack of information technology is a weakness. The post-16 curriculum is intensively devoted to Islamic theology, but a class of nine students has started work for GCE A-level English.

36. The Madrasah and the post-16 curriculum do much to prepare pupils for religious ministry or teaching. However, careers education and guidance is not available for pupils contemplating other employment or courses in further or higher education. Co-operation with the local careers service would benefit pupils in whatever they do after leaving the school.

37. Islamic studies includes a multi-cultural dimension. However, within the whole curriculum relatively little time is devoted to geography and to important historical events that have helped to shape British culture. The school could usefully now consider whether it prepares pupils sufficiently for adult life as British Muslims within a pluralistic society.

38. Information in files about the attainment of pupils in the schools they attended prior to Madinatul Uloom Al Islamiya is not systematically checked, nor made available to subject teachers. Inspection of the files of several pupils showed that they were previously identified as having special educational needs.

Two boys were on different stages of the Code of Practice². This has not been followed up by this school. Other pupils enter the school with little knowledge of English. Many of these pupils have great difficulty in English lessons and accessing the rest of the curriculum, and this restricts their progress. The school needs to establish a system for the identification of all such pupils and to assess their individual needs in order that appropriate support be provided and their progress monitored regularly. This support will require specialist knowledge of teaching pupils for whom English is an additional language or pupils with special needs.

39. The school day is longer than that found in most schools nationally. In the afternoons many boys are tired and concentration sometimes wanes in the final lessons. The timetable consists of mostly half hour lessons, although that at the end of the day is 45 minutes. A great deal of time is lost at the start of lessons when boys move to different classrooms. The school may wish to consider the reorganisation of the timetable to increase the length of lessons and to spread them better across the day with some interim breaks.

40. Little attention is given to organised extra-curricular activities and the programme at the weekends is particularly bleak. Boys use their own initiative well to organise football, basketball and table tennis activities, sometimes in tournaments. A few pupils play with model cars and there is access to the library. However, other than sporting activities there is very little enhancement activity available. On occasion, visits have been made to places of interest; for example, to the local waterworks. The frequency of such educational visits could usefully be increased.

41. Schemes of work are well organised for Urdu, Islamic studies and for much of the Islamic theology. They provide good guidance for staff and enable effective planning of the work. However, schemes for other subjects are not so well developed. Much reliance is placed on textbooks to provide coverage and any progression. Written detailed schemes of work are needed for each subject which include assessment and teaching methods to be used.

42. There is no whole school policy of assessment including marking. Well conducted examinations in theological studies and in the memorisation of the Holy Qu'ran are set every three months and parts are externally assessed. End of year examinations occur in other subjects. Marking is left to individual teachers. In English, marking is conscientious and on occasion provides helpful comments on how pupils can improve their writing. In science most of the pupils' writing is copied from the teacher's notes and very little written work is marked. Inadequate information is gained from assessments in science to inform the planning of suitable work for each class. Overall, marking provides summative evidence of what has been achieved but is not normally used to plan future work.

43. Every effort should be made to obtain for every pupil their file from previous schools. This information about pupils' previous attainment and progress should be made available to all teachers. Some baseline assessment for language and number ability on admission would help teachers plan, and the school to make better provision for those with particular needs. A recording system has just started but pupils' files contain very little information.

44. It is entirely unsatisfactory that reports are not written periodically for parents. The school does write to parents if a pupil's work or behaviour gives cause for concern. The school will provide a written report on request and parents can see the internal examination results which are posted on notice boards when they collect pupils at the end of the term. A system is needed whereby all parents receive regular written reports in all areas of the curriculum, including a boarding report. Lack of information about what is taught and how well their sons are doing at the school was mentioned by a significant majority of

² Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs guidance to Part III of Education Act 1993.

parents in responses to the questionnaire.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

45. The school has been visited many times by HMI in recent years and letters have been sent from the DfEE expressing concern about many issues, including welfare. The local fire service and SSD have visited. One of the major concerns has been the need for the school to safeguard and promote the health and safety of pupils. The school is now working with these agencies to frame documents and implement the required procedures.

46. A useful student handbook has been written giving helpful information about rules and the curriculum. A complaints procedure has recently been drafted. The independent listener has recently been appointed, but neither his telephone number nor that of Childline are not posted by the newly installed telephones. A draft statement on child protection and principles of boarding is now included in the staff handbook. The headteacher has overall pastoral responsibility and all matters are referred to him. Staff show concern for the boys, but supervisory staff are only very generally aware of the relevant issues in Volume 5 of the Children Act 1989. They all need to receive training about their role and responsibilities in boarding. No member of staff has first aid training, although this is planned to take place in the near future. Newly instituted procedures for medical appointments and recording fire drills are the responsibility of a member of the administrative staff and this is taken seriously. Elements of health and sex education are covered in science and within the Islamic curriculum.

47. A rota of supervisory staff lists three supervisors for weekdays and two for weekends, when a number of boys may go home. It was unsatisfactory that during the inspection, due to emergencies, only one supervisor was on duty. Contingency plans must be made for such an eventuality.

48. A statement in the staff handbook clearly states no form of corporal punishment may be used. A list of appropriate sanctions is given if boys misbehave. The school would do well to extend opportunities for rewarding good work and effort.

49. In order to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of pupils the school must, as a matter of urgency, comply with the recommendations within this report and that of Worcestershire SSD. This action should be part of the school development plan identified as a key issue for the school's development.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

50. The school is not effectively managed. The lack of both leadership and an open management structure has hindered the school's development. At the start of the inspection the then headteacher was not present; he had been spending only four hours each week at the school. For much of the school week another teacher deputised for him, although he has a teaching load of 15 hours each week. Late on the second day of the inspection, the trustees announced the appointment of this teacher to be the new headteacher, with immediate effect.

51. There are three trustees and one or two come to the school each term, but there are no regular meetings between the trustees, who act as a governing body, and the senior management of the school. However, the trustees are normally consulted about major changes such as those with respect to the curriculum or staff appointments.

52. Prior to the appointment of the new headteacher the senior management team of three (the

former headteacher, the new headteacher and a part-time Islamic theology teacher) were the main decision making body in the school. They consulted with the trustees and particular groups of staff as and when they felt necessary. A record of some decisions made is retained, but there is no systematic means of recording agendas or minutes of meetings.

53. In this school much of the communication is informal. However, with many part-time staff there is no certainty that whole-school issues are adequately discussed or accurate information reaches all staff.

Although senior management attempts to pass on essential information there is no regular pattern of whole-staff meetings or specialist group meetings (such as those with respect to boarding) where issues can be raised and where the implementation of school policies can be considered. A cycle of regular staff meetings that, on occasion, involve both the Madrasah and afternoon teaching staff, would improve communications, inform debate and improve understanding between staff.

54. Many subject teachers work in isolation and there is no structure to support them or to monitor the quality or effects of their teaching. The recent, but incomplete, production of a staff handbook is an important development that should assist all staff and enable senior management to check that agreed school policies are uniformly implemented. This needs to be discussed by all teachers and regularly reviewed.

55. The new headteacher is currently drawing up a revised management structure. What is now required is a whole-school development plan for the long, medium and short term. Action for the next year or so will require the identification of the major issues, their prioritisation, the nomination of particular members of staff to take responsibility, a time-scale for action, the listing of criteria by which successful implementation can be judged, and a process for the review and evaluation of their effects. Among the issues to be considered are a health and safety policy, the allocation and publication of all staff roles and responsibilities, an effective means of communication, the professional development of staff and, above all, a system whereby the implementation of all policies in place, or to be developed, is regularly monitored and evaluated.

56. The financial arrangements are well managed. The day-to-day administration of the school is mainly effective, although some minor problems occur when communication is weak.

Staffing, learning resources and accommodation

Staffing

57. Except for PE, there are a suitable number of qualified and experienced teaching staff to cover the curriculum, although not all subject teachers have qualified teacher status. It is unsatisfactory that when a specialist teacher is absent for any length of time his class is not taught, but is merely supervised by a non-specialist, as in the case of mathematics.

58. Although a few teachers have received external professional support, for example, on a Postgraduate Certificate of Education course, or by meeting with other teachers from a (brother) establishment in Bury, there is a need for a formal system for the professional development for all staff. The roles and responsibilities of each teacher must be defined and made known to all.

59. There are sufficient support and administrative staff for the general running of the school. In particular, the new headteacher is now able to delegate several tasks to administrators.

Learning resources

60. Textbooks for Islamic studies, modern Arabic and Urdu are in good supply. Elsewhere resources are inadequate. In Key Stage 3, the mathematics and science textbooks do not cater for the wide range of ability within each group. Apart from a set of suitable textbooks for Key Stage 3, there are very few

other books for use in English. Textbooks for GCSE in English and mathematics are suitable, with sufficient good quality readers for English literature. Much classwork is, of necessity, based on the textbook. While this is satisfactory for some practice exercises, it restricts the range and variety of work that can be undertaken, and is not suitable for pupils of all abilities. A wider variety of materials is needed that are helpful to lower attaining pupils, particularly in English and mathematics.

61. Practical equipment for science, mathematics and PE is very limited. In science, although the teacher demonstrates a few scientific principles, much greater use could be made of the environment for practical investigation. Pupils at present have virtually no opportunity to conduct any practical work for themselves. A suitable range of experimental and investigative science is not possible until the science laboratory is completed.

62. A cassette recorder and audio tapes of the spoken word are well used in Urdu and some tapes have recently been purchased for English. The use of tapes could be of considerable benefit for boys, for example, to hear English and Arabic spoken well. Information technology is used for administration but not available to pupils to develop their learning.

63. There is a good quality Islamic library which is well used. The English language library with fiction and non-fiction is growing and is well organised by senior students. Books are chosen to be of interest to different age groups. Borrowing rates are recorded and at the time of the inspection the majority of Year 7 had a fiction book out on loan. Reference books include good quality atlases, but they are limited for science and other subjects. As it expands this library could be used more to support pupils' learning.

64. In classes, apart from English, the furniture is inappropriate. This makes learning difficult for pupils when textbooks and writing paper are larger than the surface provided. New display boards and whiteboards should help teaching and learning. There is less display of Islamic art in and around the school than might be expected.

Accommodation

65. The premises, which are suitable to be a school, comprise many buildings scattered over a large site. The rural location and extensive grounds, with grassed areas and many mature trees, make for a very attractive environment in which to learn. Much more use could be made of the school grounds; for example, in science. Maintenance of such a large site is difficult and although much work has been done, many buildings are still derelict. Reasonable action has been taken to cordon off these potentially hazardous areas but staff must be vigilant. Building work is continuing at the school; consequently rubbish, including broken glass, can be found in areas used by boys to play football. Some uneven surfaces and holes in the concrete need to be filled. These hazards must be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

66. The classrooms, some boarding accommodation for over 16 year olds, and the mosque are in one single-storey building that has now been refurbished to a good standard. It is clean and warm with new carpets throughout. Pupils eat their meals in this area. Sufficient ablution and toilet facilities are available in this block. A medical room is available with a bed and lockable cabinet, but no sink.

67. The main boarding house, called Darul Saleem, houses all pupils under 16 year old. Much work has been done since the last HMI visit and visits by SSD and the Health and Safety Executive to bring this accommodation up to an acceptable standard. The showers and toilets are adequate, but refurbishment of more facilities is almost complete. Bedrooms have been painted and are now clean and tidy. New carpeting has been laid in bedrooms and corridors. Some work still needs to be done to provide curtains and all windows above the ground floor need to be checked for safety. The common room has a table tennis table and some board games but is uninviting. Small kitchens are available for the boys' use to make snacks. All electrical equipment, such as kettles and sandwich makers, need to be checked by a qualified electrician for safety. The fire extinguishers in the kitchens must be checked at the same time as all the other fire equipment. When using the laundry no flexes from machines must trail across the room into the corridor.

68. A system of regular maintenance checks has been introduced. The school needs to review this to ensure that the checks are frequent enough and are carried out.

INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence

69. The reporting inspection took place on 1-3 June 1998 and was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools (HMI) and an Additional Inspector who is a specialist in Islamic studies and Arabic and Urdu. Twenty six lessons covering 15 hours of teaching were observed. Pupils written work was inspected and formal and informal discussions were held with staff and most were seen teaching. Inspectors visited the boarding provision during the evening as well as the supervised prep time. Eighty completed parents' questionnaires were received.

Data and indicators

Pupil data

Year as applicable	Total
7	24
8	22
9	33
10	25
11	18
Over 16s	59
Total	181

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils who might be statements
181	None	Not known

Teachers

Total number of teachers in Madrasah	pt. 14
Total number of teachers in school	pt. 4
Number of pupils per teacher	11

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	180
Number of questionnaires returned:	80
Percentage return rate:	45

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No response
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	43	35	9	1	4	8
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	44	46	1	-	3	6
The school handles complaints from parents well	44	32	4	1	1	18
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	44	48	-	-	3	5
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	40	36	8	5	5	6
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	44	48	3	-	-	5
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	45	44	1	3	-	7
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	69	25	-	-	-	6
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	74	18	3	-	-	5
My child(ren) like(s) school	60	31	1	-	-	8