

# Madinatul Uloom Al Islamiya College

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	885/6031
Unique Reference Number	117044
Inspection number	316911
Inspection dates	21 - 22 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Robert Drew AI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

## Information about the college

Madinatul Uloom Al Islamiya College is an independent Islamic boarding school for boys, dedicated to providing Islamic as well as secular education. Opened in 1992, it has a 22 acre rural site four miles southeast of Kidderminster. All teaching blocks and residential accommodation are set within the college campus. Students are allocated to hostels according to their age group. There are currently 216 students on roll, aged from 12 to 24. There are no students with special educational needs and none at an early stage of acquiring English. Madinatul Uloom aims: *"To educate the students and instil in them the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and practices of our Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as well as other arts and sciences. It also strives to promote and cultivate good behaviour, morals, mutual respect and tolerance"*. It was last inspected, both by Ofsted and the Commission for Social Care, in 2005.

## Evaluation of the college

Madinatul Uloom Al Islamiya College provides a good quality of education and care, and students make good progress as a result. Students are particularly positive about the strong sense of support and care they receive in the college community. The improvement noted in earlier inspections continues, with rising academic standards, a wider curriculum and improvements in teaching. Several aspects of the curriculum are good, especially the religious teaching and National Curriculum history. The students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and their welfare, health and safety are promoted well. The college complies with all but two of the regulations and meets the national standards for boarding schools.

## Quality of education

The quality of education is good. There are many strengths and some aspects which are satisfactory.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Most of the college's curricular provision is good, but it fails to provide a substantial place for aesthetic provision. No design or art programmes currently exist. Educational visits and extra-curricular activities are also limited compared with those in most other schools. However, Islamic Studies are strongly represented, in line with the college's aims, and key National Curriculum

subjects such as English, mathematics, science and religious education are well established. The college continues to expand the range of other subjects introduced in recent years, with information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education successful recent additions. The quality of schemes of work in many areas is good, for instance in history, where investigative work and questioning skills have a very significant place. Careers education and personal and social education are taught as part of Islamic Studies as well as through tutorial lessons once a week.

Teaching and learning are good and exploit to the full the opportunities offered by the curriculum. Teachers know their subjects well and explain ideas with clarity and confidence. Students come to lessons particularly well inclined to learn and pay full attention, joining in readily whenever possible. The very best lessons involve students extensively through skilful questioning and imaginative tasks. These lessons also tend to provide work at a variety of levels, matching the differing needs of students well. Occasionally, teaching depends too heavily on students taking notes from the board and sometimes lacks challenging tasks to stretch able students. Most commonly however, progress is good because relationships are strong and students are interested in their studies and keen to do well. The teaching of Islamic Studies is particularly authoritative and generates very intense concentration and application from students. Teaching of *hifz* (memorization of the Qur'an) *tajweed* (correct recitation) and *tafseer* (interpretation of texts) are all strongly teacher-led, but require close listening and involve regular oral responses from students. At times, however, it is difficult for even the most diligent student to hear or be heard because of acoustic problems in the halls used for Qur'anic studies.

At a broad level assessment is good. Twice-yearly reports for all students trigger extensive data collection and interpretation. Students are aware of their targets and how to meet them. Expectations are high and students appreciate that challenge is involved. Day-to-day marking and tracking are more variable. For instance, some excellent practice was seen in Qur'anic studies. Marking in science is thorough, but is largely absent in parts of the Islamic Studies programme.

Crucially, positive aspects of teaching and attitudes to learning more than counter any shortcomings. Because most teaching is good and students are so highly motivated, overall progress in the college is impressive. This allows students to achieve very well. They arrive in Years 8 and 9, with standards generally well below national levels, but they reach GCSE standards which are significantly higher than the national average.

## Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students

Students show outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their behaviour is also outstanding. Mature attitudes prevail in their dealings with adults and other students. They are strongly reflective and value spiritual awareness. They show a good knowledge of other cultures in the United Kingdom and beyond.

Students' social and moral development is high. This underpins their impressive behaviour, responsibility and sense of community. Mutual respect between staff and students is strong and visitors are received with maturity by students. The college's religious aims seek explicitly to cultivate such responses, but in addition, the day-to-day example of staff, the focus of history lessons, assemblies and evening talks also contribute significantly. Students understand perspectives other than their own, partly because of discussions of current social and political issues, but also because of the contributions of staff from a range of backgrounds. Students enjoy the college and their promptness to lessons and limited absences confirm this. Their constructive attitudes and good literacy and numeracy skills give them a very effective basis for future economic well-being. Older students also make a strong contribution to college life, helping the residential supervisors and organising events for younger students. They show a good awareness of public services and institutions. Students of all ages regularly contribute to assemblies and a sense of harmony prevails.

The impact of such good personal development is enormous. Not only do students greatly increase their self-esteem, but their commitment to learning is so positive that progress in lessons is always at least good.

## Welfare, health and safety of the students

Provision for student care is good. Students say that they feel particularly safe at this college. Their views are well supported by the evidence of a caring staff and effective systems for promoting students' welfare and safety. The college complies with regulations concerning safeguarding children and is rigorous in applying policies which minimise health and safety risks. Fire safety is good, with a risk assessment confirmed by the local fire authority. Bullying is extremely rare. College policies on behaviour are clear and are followed very closely by staff and students. Students are treated with respect and feel part of a very supportive community. Healthy eating is promoted well, with high quality meals freshly produced on site. Participation in sport is adequate and increasing. The college fulfils its responsibilities in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

## Suitability of the proprietor and staff

Checks on the suitability of staff are rigorous, and more than meet statutory requirements. The college's work in this respect is well organised and administratively efficient. All policies are kept up-to-date and a single central register is maintained.

## College's premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation are safe, are conducive to effective learning and meet all but one of the requirements. The college has systematically improved its premises since opening and the residential accommodation is currently being

upgraded. Specialist science accommodation is an established feature to which new specialist ICT and library facilities have been added. Teaching is generally in spacious and adequately furnished rooms. The provision for Qur'anic studies uses large halls to teach several groups simultaneously and, consequently, audibility for students and teachers is poor and impacts negatively on learning.

## Provision of information for parents, carers and others

A good range of communications from the college keeps parents and carers well informed about students' progress. Twice-yearly reports give good levels of detail on the standards being reached and how students can improve.

## Procedures for handling complaints

The college has effective procedures for dealing fairly with complaints.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The college meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The college does not meet all requirements in respect of the curriculum (standard 1) and must:

- provide more design and art work in the curriculum so that the aesthetic dimension of the curriculum is sufficiently represented (paragraph 1(2)(a)(ii)).

The college does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- improve the accommodation for Qur'anic studies by rectifying the acoustic problems currently faced by staff and students (paragraph 5(o)).

## What the college could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the college might wish to consider the following points for development:

- improve the consistency of marking, such as in Islamic studies
- increase the provision of extra-curricular activities and educational visits.

## College details

Name of college	Madinatul Uloom Al Islamiya School
DCSF number	885/6031
Unique reference number	117044
Type of college	Muslim residential college
Status	Independent
Date school opened	1992
Age range of students	12 - 24
Gender of students	Boys
Number on roll (full-time students)	Boys: 216
Number of boarders	Boys: 192
Annual fees (day students)	£500
Annual fees (boarders)	£2,000
Address of college	Butts Lane Summerfield Kidderminster Worcestershire DY10 4BH
Telephone number	0156 266894
Fax number	0156 266894
Email address	headteacher@madinatul-uloom.org
Headteacher	Mr A Hans
Proprietor	Board of Trustees
Reporting inspector	Robert Drew AI
Dates of inspection	20 - 21 November 2007