

Al Jamiah Al Islamiyyah

Inspection report for boarding school

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Inspector	Lynn O'Driscoll
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Date of last inspection	20 June 2007

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About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding:	this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good:	this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory:	this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate:	this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Service information

Brief description of the service

Al Jamiah Al Islamiyyah is an independent Muslim boarding school which is registered with the Department for Education and Skills for 170 boys aged between 11 and 21 years. The maximum number of boarders at any one time is 117. There are currently 158 students of which 97 are boarders and 40 are over 18 years. There are no students with statements of special educational needs and none who are physically disabled. The school is maintained by a board of trustees which meets every term to review the boarding provision. Its mission statement is 'to encourage the development of independent, well balanced and well educated young men'.

Summary

This judgement is reached following a full key inspection visit which took place over four days. Students of all ages were actively involved in this process. Overall students speak highly about the school and recognise that it is constantly improving. They say, 'they provide everything we need, everyone is very nice, this is a wonderful school'. Many especially highlighted the sound relationships between staff and boarders and between students. They say, 'it's an excellent school, everyone is kind and helpful and respect each other'. A judgement of satisfactory best reflects the significant improvements made at the school in the last 12 months, but all the National Minimum Standards are still not being met in full. In particular, some of the documentation does not sufficiently evidence the good practice taking place at Al Jamiah Al Islamiyyah.

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

The majority of the 23 actions raised at the last inspection have been efficiently addressed resulting in improvements in all the outcome areas. Many of the boarders acknowledge the positive changes that have taken place. They say, 'it's improved a lot from last year, they are always making it better'. Out of the seven actions raised relating to 'being healthy', three have been addressed in full and there is good documentary evidence that the other four in respect of maintaining health records have much improved and continue to be developed. Consequently, all boarders are now registered with a local doctor, the choice of menu has increased and drinking water is accessible. The five actions raised to improve the safety of boarders have all been met in full resulting in improvements to the child protection policy, the recording of sanctions and restraints and fire procedures. Regarding 'positive contribution', an independent listener has been visiting the school for over a year so the boys have got to know him better and therefore feel able to approach him if they have any concerns. The accommodation has significantly improved in the last 12 months and all five actions have been satisfactorily addressed. None of the dormitories are overcrowded and bunk beds are no longer used. Every boarder has adequate and lockable storage space for their personal possessions and there is suitable facilities for private studies. With regard to 'organisation', the staff handbook has been revised and now includes all the details as specified in the National Minimum Standards. Boarding staff have all had an annual appraisal and the school's records are monitored by the head of care and the principal.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Overall, there are satisfactory arrangements in place to help to ensure the boarders at Al Jamiah Al Islamiyyah remain fit and healthy. Staff who administer first aid are suitably trained so minor injuries can be quickly and appropriately treated. Most boarders say they are well looked after at the school if they are poorly or require first aid and they are all registered with a local doctor. They say, 'the first aider is like a friend and he always jokes around with us'. Written records are maintained of students attending the sick bay stipulating the date, time, reason and treatment given, but not the dosage. Also, the total of the non prescription medication administered does not tally with the actual stock. The school are continuing to develop individual health and welfare files on each student to ensure they have up to date information to meet their unique needs. The head of care treats and respects each boarder as an individual in their own right and is very knowledgeable about how the school manages specific needs, but some of the entries in the files are not in sufficient detail. For example, individual plans are not in place for boarders with special welfare needs. A drugs and alcohol misuse policy is in place and relevant age appropriate leaflets are available to inform students about maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The healthy eating policy is currently being revised. Most boarders are happy with the recent increased choice of evening meals on offer. In particular, they confirm a better balance of Asian and European menus which they had specifically requested. They say, 'the meals have improved. We can see the effort that has been made. They give us different foods and you can eat as much as you like'. They would now like more variety at breakfast. Students confirm easy access to food and drinks outside of the main meal times from the well stocked and reasonably priced tuck shop, which is a very popular non profit making service run by students. The records, however, would not safeguard them from allegations of mishandling of monies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Overall, there are satisfactory arrangements in place to help to ensure every student, staff who work at the School and all visitors are kept safe. The majority of students say they 'always' feel safe and well cared for at Al Jamiah Al Islamiyyah and confirm they are protected from harm. They say 'the staff, older students and supervisors look after us very carefully so we feel safe', and, 'they look after each and every individual with care and ensure 24 hour protection which is satisfying'. A countering bullying policy is in place which includes all the details as outlined in the National Minimum Standards. Boarders do not consider bullying to be a major problem at the school and the students who did report that they are being bullied were taken seriously and it was immediately and appropriately addressed by the head of care. A senior member of staff is responsible for safeguarding and is clear about the role. A child protection policy is in place recently revised in line with Bolton Council's new procedures, but it has not as yet been formally ratified by the local safeguarding board. Within the last twelve months, 14 staff have undertaken safeguarding training and the head of care and two teachers have recently attended a trainers course to enable them to provide a basic internal course for the remaining staff. The standards of behaviour at the school are generally high and most of the relatively few sanctions imposed are fair. The students' assertion that the rules imposed by the weekend staff are 'harsh' was immediately and appropriately addressed by the head of care. Records are in satisfactory order and monitored by the principal of the school. There is a complaints procedure in place, known and understood by students and families who have exercised this right. Any concerns

are fully investigated and constructive outcomes reached in a timely manner. Satisfactory records are maintained and monitored by the head of care. Boarders say, 'when you complain about something, they sort it out for you as soon as possible'. All the required safety certificates are in place and weekly internal fire checks undertaken to ensure the building is kept safe. The school also have regular fire drills to ensure all boarders respond quickly and appropriately in the case of a fire and fire marshals are strategically placed within the building to ensure everyone evacuates. There are, however, no up to date building risk assessments. Adequate security measures are in place to prevent unauthorised access to the school. Boarders' accommodation is secure from public intrusion and the bedrooms are appropriately segregated for different age groups. The school's recruitment procedures are in line with the National Minimum Standards and include the renewal every three years of enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks on all staff, trustees and students with supervisory responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Boarders really enjoyed a recent trip to Alton Towers and are satisfied with the range of activities on offer in the day and evening. They say, 'there is always something to do. We have a good time'. Football, cricket, pool and table tennis are particularly popular. Some, however, report limited choice and freedom at the weekends. All students have a number of people they would turn to if they needed help or advice and most would go straight to the head of care who they describe as 'a firm but fair man and sometimes he can be quite fun'. They say, 'the principal and head teacher always say if you need any help or want to give your opinion then you are free to go to them'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Students confirm they have a range of opportunities to contribute their views about the boarding provision which are taken into account in the ongoing development and practices at Al Jamiah Al Islamiyyah. These include questionnaires, a suggestion box and the school's 'shura' council which has representatives from all the secular year groups and all the Urdu classes. There is a general and genuine atmosphere of openness at this school. Students are actively encouraged to voice their concerns about any matters and most feel able to approach the head of care directly. There are also particularly sound relationships between staff and boarders. Students say, 'we can speak freely on any issues, we are treated like a family and all of us are like brothers'. The telephone booths are suitably located to enable students to have private conversations and they include a list of relevant external helpline numbers to ensure direct and confidential access. Weekly home leave is actively discouraged for older students finding it distracts from their studies, but years seven to nine can go home if requested by parents and appropriate transport is arranged. The majority of boarders go home every fourth weekend, but those living some distance from Al Jamiah Al Islamiyyah find they have little time to spend with their families because they have to be back at the school before six on Sunday evening. The Head has considered these views and in response has extended the return time to nine, which has really pleased the boys.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Students are very satisfied with the continual improvements to the boarding provision. The school provides clean and spacious boarding accommodation which is furnished and decorated to a satisfactory standard throughout. A new extension including a prayer hall and increased shower and toileting facilities is completed to a high standard. The private grounds provide safe and suitable facilities for outdoor recreation. Full time maintenance personnel ensure minor repairs are efficiently addressed.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The school's induction pack is sent out to the families of all prospective students to inform them about the boarding principles and practices at Al Jamiah Al Islamiyyah and all new staff receive a handbook. The management team are committed to continually improving upon the services provided at the school and are accessible to students and staff. Representatives of the trustees also make frequent unannounced visits to the school at different times of the day and evening to talk to boarders and to check on their welfare. As the boys know them very well, they are comfortable to approach them about any concerns and their views are listened to and acted upon. The head of care has very good knowledge of, and responds appropriately to, the boarders' unique needs and personalities. He is well respected by the boys who say, 'he always looks after us'. A satisfactory system for monitoring of records is in place and the board of trustees is kept informed of any significant events. They formally meet at least once each term to specifically review the boarding provision. Annual appraisals take place on boarding staff to review their performance and to identify any training needs, but there is no formal system in place for one to one supervision.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure first aid records are in sufficient detail (NMS 15.12)
- ensure individual health and welfare files contain sufficient details (NMS 7.1)
- ensure an individual welfare plan is in place for any boarder with special welfare needs, which is agreed by his parents (NMS 17.2)
- ensure accurate records are maintained of the stock of non prescription medication (NMS 15.2)
- ensure boarders have a variety of food and drink on offer at breakfast (NMS 24.1)
- ensure tuck shop records are satisfactorily maintained (NMS 25.4)

- ensure the school's child protection policy is formally ratified by Bolton's safeguarding board (NMS 3.1)
- ensure building risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated (NMS 47.9)
- ensure a reasonable amount of free time is given to boarders and a sufficient range of constructive activities are available to them at the weekends (NMS 46.1)
- consider providing boarding staff with regular opportunities for formal one to one supervision sessions which are minuted (NMS 34.6).

Annex

Annex A

National Minimum Standards for boarding school

Being healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders' health is promoted (NMS 6)
- safeguarding and promoting boarders' health and welfare are supported by appropriate records (NMS 7)
- boarders' receive first aid and health care as necessary (NMS 15)
- boarders are adequately supervised and looked after when ill (NMS 16)
- boarders are supported in relation to any health or personal problems (NMS 17)
- boarders receive good quality catering provision (NMS 24)
- boarders have access to food and drinking water in addition to main meals (NMS 25)
- boarders are suitably accommodated when ill (NMS 48)
- boarders' clothing and bedding are adequately laundered (NMS 49).

Ofsted considers 6 and 15 the key standards to be inspected.

Staying safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders are protected from bullying (NMS 2)
- boarders are protected from abuse (NMS 3)
- use of discipline with boarders is fair and appropriate (NMS 4)
- boarders' complaints are responded to appropriately (NMS 5)
- the operation of any prefect system safeguards and promotes boarders' welfare (NMS 13)
- boarders' welfare is protected in any appointment of educational guardians by the school (NMS 22)
- boarders are protected from the risk of fire (NMS 26)
- the welfare of any children other than the school's pupils is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated by the school (NMS 28)
- boarders' safety and welfare are protected during high risk activities (NMS 29)
- boarders' personal privacy is respected (NMS 37)
- there is vigorous selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers working with boarders (NMS 38)
- boarders are protected from unsupervised contact at school with adults who have not been subject to the school's complete recruitment checking procedures; all unchecked visitors to the boarding premises are supervised (NMS 39)
- boarders have their own accommodation, which is secure from public intrusion (NMS 41)
- boarders are protected from safety hazards (NMS 47)

Ofsted considers 2, 3, 4, 5, 26, 37, 38, 39, 41 and 47 the key standards to be inspected.

Enjoying and achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders have access to a range and choice of activities (NMS 11)
- boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination (NMS 18)
- boarders' welfare is not compromised by unusual or onerous demands (NMS 27)
- boarders have satisfactory provision to study (NMS 43)
- boarders have access to a range of safe recreational areas (NMS 46)

Ofsted considers 14 and 18 the key standards to be inspected.

Annex A

Making a positive contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders are enabled to contribute to the operation of boarding in the school (NMS 12)
- boarders receive personal support from staff (NMS 14)
- boarders can maintain private contact with their parents and families (NMS 19)
- new boarders are introduced to the school's procedures and operation, and are enabled to settle in (NMS 21)
- boarders have appropriate access to information and facilities outside the school (NMS 30)
- there are sound relationships between staff and boarders (NMS 36)

Ofsted considers 12 and 19 the key standards to be inspected.

Achieving economic well-being

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders' possessions and money are protected (NMS 20)
- boarders are provided with satisfactory accommodation (NMS 40)
- boarders have satisfactory sleeping accommodation (NMS 42)
- boarders have adequate private toilet and washing facilities (NMS 44)
- boarders have satisfactory provision for changing by day (NMS 45)
- boarders can obtain personal requisites while accommodated at school (NMS 50)

Ofsted considers 51 the key standard to be inspected.

Organisation

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- a suitable statement of the school's principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff (NMS 1)
- there is clear leadership of boarding in the school (NMS 8)
- crises affecting boarders' welfare are managed effectively (NMS 9)
- the school's organisation of boarding contributes to boarders' welfare (NMS 10)
- risk assessment and school record-keeping contribute to boarders' welfare (NMS 23)
- boarders are supervised adequately by staff (NMS 31)
- staff exercise appropriate supervision of boarders leaving the school site (NMS 32)
- boarders are adequately supervised at night (NMS 33)
- boarders are looked after by staff which have specific boarding duties, and have received adequate induction and continued training (NMS 34)
- boarders are looked after by staff which follow clear boarding policies and practice (NMS 35)
- the welfare of boarders placed in lodgings is safeguarded and promoted (NMS 51)
- the welfare of boarders is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated away from the school site on short-term visits (NMS 52)

Ofsted considers 1, 23, 31 and 34 the key standards to be inspected.