

# Rawdhatul Uloom

Independent school light-touch inspection report

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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, 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.<sup>1, 2</sup>

This was a light touch educational inspection which focused principally on the quality of education provided by the school; its provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the improvements the school has made since its last inspection.

## **Information about the school**

Rawdhatul Uloom School is an Islamic primary day school for pupils aged from four to 11 years of age. The school is located in a residential area near the centre of Burnley. There are 85 pupils currently on roll. Of these, 13 children are in the Early Years Foundation Stage. From the age of eight, girls and boys are taught in separate areas of the school. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs.

The school provides an education based on Islamic teaching and way of life. The secular and Islamic parts of the curriculum are viewed as a unity, with the aim of developing in pupils 'a character that will allow them to function as members who can contribute positively to their community and society in general'. The school was registered in 2006 and had its first full inspection in February 2008. A new headteacher took up post in November 2009.

## **Evaluation of the school**

The quality of education is satisfactory. The school fulfils its aims as an Islamic school well; the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good, with particular strengths in their spiritual and moral development. Teaching, assessment and the curriculum are satisfactory overall enabling the pupils to make satisfactory progress. The school meets all the regulations for independent schools and has made satisfactory progress since its previous inspection. The school's leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Provision for safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. The Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

## Quality of education

The curriculum is satisfactory. It has been appropriately modified since the previous inspection and is now based on the National Curriculum. This provides a better and more balanced curriculum and contributes to pupils' enjoyment of school, enabling them to make satisfactory progress in their learning. Suitable schemes of work and plans for each subject are in place and are currently under review for the longer term, with a view to introducing a more definitive curriculum in the near future. More time is now allocated to the secular elements of the curriculum, for example, the school has introduced lessons in history and geography. Themes considered include, for example, the history of toys for younger children and the Egyptians and Romans for older ones.

The secular and Islamic parts of the curriculum are integrated effectively, with both contributing to the pupils' education and personal development. Art, personal, social and health education (PSHE) and Islamic Studies are linked up well, but this good practice has yet to be extended to some other subjects, such as mathematics.

The Islamic Studies programme develops pupils' knowledge of Islamic teaching and practice well and is related to everyday life in considering topics such as dress, manners, cleanliness and how to treat one other. Pupils show that they understand and can apply what they have learnt. For example, in discussion, younger pupils explained how their behaviour towards their parents was based on teaching about the importance of respect. Pupils in all years study Arabic as a modern foreign language.

When they join the school some children have little or no English, so there is an appropriate emphasis from a very early age on building up their literacy skills. The school is working with families to raise literacy skills in the community as a whole.

There are now more opportunities for pupils to be creative and use their imagination than before; for example, in art and craft lessons pupils have created models of mosques, and worked with textiles. Pupils were observed making stained glass representations of patterns they had chosen. Opportunities for physical education (PE) remain restricted, as at the time of the previous inspection, because there is a limited amount of space outdoors. Lessons in PE take place in the school hall, providing only adequate opportunities for regular exercise. The school recognises this as an area where its provision is weaker, and is considering the use of a local community centre to extend the range of sporting activities it can offer.

The ICT room was undergoing refurbishment at the time of the inspection. Consequently, pupils were not receiving lessons in information and communication technology (ICT) and had little opportunity to develop their ICT skills. The school's leaders and pupils themselves consider that ICT skills are valuable in preparing for the next stage of their education and for their future working lives. It is envisaged that ICT lessons will resume in the summer term.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good. The new headteacher has supported and encouraged staff to plan and teach lessons that really engage pupils and make them think for themselves. As a result, pupils take an active part in their lessons, freely asking questions and confidently offering answers. They regularly work in groups or pairs, so that they can share ideas. Activities in lessons are varied, including practical activities to apply what pupils are learning. This helps to retain pupils' interest and attention. The atmosphere for learning is good; 'Teachers smile at us', said one pupil, explaining that teachers did not need to be strict as pupils were keen to learn.

Pupils' progress over time is satisfactory, but in lessons it is now often good as the pace of learning is accelerating. The school has a satisfactory system for assessing pupils' progress. This is conducted annually, on a formal basis, drawing on national tests. However, the school has not kept records of the results of these tests to enable it to monitor the impact of what is being taught. Recently, some additional testing mid-year has been introduced as part of the school's plans to assess pupils' academic progress more frequently. Older pupils have personal targets for improving their work but these are not yet related to the subject-based level descriptors of the National Curriculum.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils**

The spiritual, moral social and cultural development of the pupils is good overall. Pupils' moral and spiritual development is outstanding, reflecting their religious beliefs, and the school's Islamic foundation and emphasis. Pupils' social development is good. The school recognises that there is further work to be done to improve pupils' cultural development, which is satisfactory.

Pupils' behaviour is good overall and in lessons it is outstanding. They have an exceptionally positive attitude to school and evidently enjoy learning. Their questionnaire responses were typically very positive, one pupil commenting that they would like to come to school also at weekends! Pupils willingly help each other, show great respect for their teachers and express clearly their affiliation to their school and religion. They relate how they behave closely according to the teachings of Islam. Pupils work together cooperatively. They are consulted about a range of school issues, such as healthy food choices. The Islamic environment contributes extensively to pupils' moral development. They have high aspirations for their future lives. When pupils' behaviour falls short of excellent, this tends to be when they are growing tired or have been indoors for long periods.

Pupils have good links with the local and wider community, particularly through the mosque. They participate in fundraising for national and international charities, such as the appeals for the Pakistan earthquake disaster and the recent tsunami in Japan. The daily assembly and prayer sessions, led by the headteacher, make an outstanding contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

In discussions, pupils show an empathetic and tolerant attitude towards other religions and cultures. In lessons, such as Islamic studies, pupils learn about some other cultures. Daily assemblies consider teachings and themes that are common across different religions but the school has no formal programme for teaching about different religions found in the wider community, to further promote pupils' cultural awareness. There are no visitors into school, or visits out of school that might further extend pupils' appreciation of different cultures. They have a satisfactory understanding of public institutions and services such as the ambulance and fire and rescue services in England.

## **Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety**

The provision for safeguarding pupils' health, safety and welfare is good. Safeguarding checks, including recruitment practices and the maintenance and updating of the single central register of staff, are robust. Pupils are very well cared for by a team of dedicated staff who pay close attention to their needs. Suitable policies and procedures help to ensure that pupils are kept free from harm. Appropriately trained members of staff take responsibility for first aid including paediatric first aid.

Staff understand their responsibilities for child protection. The child protection training for the designated person is not up to date, but a suitable refresher course has been firmly booked.

The school has an effective anti-bullying policy; as a result, pupils feel safe in school. Parents' questionnaire responses show that they are very satisfied with the school's provision, although a few commented on the lack of extra-curricular activities or visits.

Pupils show a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. The school discourages the inclusion of unhealthy snacks in their packed lunches. The school's outdoor facilities are limited and the time allocated to physical activity is limited. Attendance registers meet requirements. The rate of attendance is below average but shows signs of recent improvement. The school is reinforcing to parents the message of the link between regular attendance and good progress. A system to check on pupils on the first day of absence is now fully in place. The school fulfils its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, as amended.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Children develop an awareness of how to keep healthy and safe. They learn the basic elements of reading and writing and how to share and play cooperatively. Children really enjoy being in school because teachers make lessons fun, so that they learn through play. They settle in well, make satisfactory progress in their learning and are ready to move on to Year 1.

Teaching is good, imaginative, and suitably balanced between activities that are led by the teacher, and those that children choose for themselves. There are good opportunities for them to learn through imaginative and creative play. Teachers emphasise developing speaking and listening skills. This is highly appropriate, as English is an additional language for a good number of the children.

The provision and learning environment are satisfactory overall. There is a sufficient range of equipment and activities indoors, such as sand, water and a shop area to stimulate children's learning and development, although children do not have any computer software to aid their learning. There is no outside area for early learning and play. As a result, children have insufficient opportunities to use an outdoor space to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding and the overall outcomes for children are satisfactory.

Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. New leaders were appointed in September 2010. They have clear priorities and a good vision for improvement. They understand the requirements of the early years curriculum and have implemented a suitable assessment system to track children's progress in lessons and over time. However, the school was not able to produce clear records of the end-of-stage profiles from the summer term 2010.

Leaders show good regard for promoting the safety and well-being of the children. Staff are appropriately qualified and children are cared for well. Staff are fully aware of child protection procedures. They work appropriately in partnership with parents to support their children's learning, although the role of the 'Key Worker' for each child is not fully clear.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').

In order to comply with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school must:

- provide appropriate opportunities for children to use an outdoor area to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding.

## **What the school could do to improve further**

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

- refine the systems for assessing pupils' progress throughout the school so that assessment is more regular and informs planning for lessons to enable all pupils to make good progress and equip the school to monitor more effectively the impact of what it provides
- provide further opportunities for pupils to learn about the wider community, including other religions, different cultures and peoples.



## Inspection judgements

Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
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### The quality of education

Overall quality of education			√	
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils			√	
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs			√	
How well pupils make progress in their learning			√	

### Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		√		
The behaviour of pupils		√		

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		√		
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### The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage			√	
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage			√	
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage			√	
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage			√	

## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	Islamic Primary		
<b>Date school opened</b>	2006		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11 years		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 36	Girls: 34	Total: 70
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£900		
<b>Address of school</b>	Jamia Masjid-E-Farooq-Azam North Street Burnley Lancashire BB10 1LU		
<b>Telephone number</b>	01282 832170		
<b>Email address</b>	gardenofknowledge2@yahoo.co.uk		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Ayub Patel		
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mr Sakik Uddin		