

Dar Al-Huda High School for Girls

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Flora Bean

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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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.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Dar Al-Huda High School for Girls is an independent Muslim secondary day school in London. It opened in October 2009 and this is the school's first inspection since its registration. The school moved to its current location in Hendon in April 2012. It was previously situated in Acton Central. The school is in temporary rented accommodation; however, the proprietor has recently acquired new premises in Acton, west London, and will inform the Department for Education when the premises are ready for educational use.

The school is registered to admit 30 girls aged between 11 to 16 years. There are currently 28 girls on roll. None has a statement of special educational needs. The girls come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds and most are bilingual. They are at various advanced stages of learning English as an additional language.

The school aims to 'provide an Islamic environment which offers a broad, balanced and relevant education based on the National Curriculum that makes learning a positive and enjoyable experience and ensures that all girls will value and through which they will grow in confidence and self-awareness'.

Evaluation of the school

Dar Al-Huda High School for Girls provides an outstanding quality of education and very successfully meets its aims. Outstanding teaching and behaviour, combined with a well-balanced and diverse curriculum and outstanding provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, enable the girls to make outstanding progress. Provision for welfare, health and safety, including safeguarding arrangements, is outstanding. All regulatory requirements are met.

Quality of education

The curriculum is outstanding. Provision is directly relevant to the girls' needs and enables them to make exceptionally good progress both personally and academically. It includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum which are well-planned and innovative, but also includes a very good range of activities, trips

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

and outings. Years 10 and 11 students, for example, have recently been on a day university visit as part of their career programme. There have also been visits to London museums, theatres and art galleries, and to local places of interest. Such enrichment activities link in very well to their work in subjects; for example, a year group trip to a local pizzeria when girls were studying Italy.

The curriculum delivered in class provides a rich and varied range of interesting and stimulating learning experiences which the girls enjoy immensely. Lessons are brought to life and the topics engage the girls' interest; for example, in history when they had to decide how to prevent the English Civil War and in geography where a variety of games and activities encouraged the girls to develop their knowledge of the world map and improve their map-reading skills. In religious education, girls explored the notion of life after death and in personal, social and health education (PSHE) they discussed the Islamic idea of 'intention' and applied it to target setting in their work. Technology is covered through information and communication technology (ICT), and GCSE students have just completed their individual assessment projects. Girls enhance their sporting abilities through regular and well-planned sports lessons at a local school. The provision helps promote healthy lifestyles and makes a positive impact on further developing girls' physical skills but this does not take place every week.

Personal, social and health education is taught effectively, as a weekly lesson for all year groups, and covers a good range of relevant topics. Careers education is of good quality and is provided from Year 7 onwards. Year 10 girls have opportunities to complete work experience in a variety of fields of interest and the activities help prepare them for adult life very effectively. The school also invites a variety of visiting speakers to broaden students' horizons.

Teaching and assessment are outstanding and both contribute significantly to the girls making outstanding progress. The teaching observed was consistently good or better. Senior staff set exacting standards and teachers rise to the high expectations. Teaching is regularly monitored and staff are well trained and supported to provide this highly effective teaching. Teaching staff work extremely hard and take great pride in their work. Every lesson is given careful thought to ensure that each girl's specific learning needs are met.

Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and teach concepts securely. They promote girls' thinking skills very effectively through innovative techniques and searching questioning. In the best lessons, of which there are many, the pace is always lively, and lessons are imaginative and creative with carefully explained challenges and plenty of interactive tasks. Girls' engagement and attitudes to learning are excellent. Girls say that they find their lessons enjoyable, interesting and motivating. Teachers actively encourage independent thinking, set real challenges and promote independently learning. There are plenty of opportunities for girls to discuss things with teachers and each other. Such activity also develops girls' speaking and social skills. In the small number of lessons that were good rather than outstanding, girls worked very well and completed the tasks set for them. In these

lessons there were fewer opportunities for them to discuss and reinforce their learning but they still made good progress.

Classroom resources are of good quality and there is sufficient quantity and range for the different ability levels. Interactive whiteboards have been installed in almost all teaching rooms and are used imaginatively to enhance learning. Scrutiny of girls' written work revealed that subjects are linked together well and this ensures that learning is coherent and meaningful.

Assessment procedures are rigorous and contribute to the very good progress made. All girls are assessed effectively on arrival with data carefully recorded and analysed by the assessment coordinator as a basis for monitoring girls' progress. There are frequent tests and other forms of assessment. Results are discussed with subject teachers and the girls themselves to ensure that girls understand their strengths and weaknesses and what must be improved.

Girls' work is regularly marked, with helpful comments for improvement. They are encouraged to discuss their written work with teachers and this enhances their learning experience and helps them contribute to setting their own targets.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Provision for girls' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. While the school teaches and endorses the Muslim faith, girls are encouraged through religious studies lessons and assemblies to have an appreciation and understanding of other faiths. For example, the school takes part in the local 'Three Faiths Forum' where opportunities are provided for girls to learn about Christianity and Judaism.

Attendance is excellent and girls' attitudes to school are exceptionally positive, as shown in lessons and in their attitudes to each other. Behaviour is outstanding. Girls get on very well with adults and each other and there is little disharmony. They take great pride in their school and acknowledge the opportunities open to them within their small community. They contribute to school life through participating in the school representative meetings where they have opportunities to discuss school issues and raise money for local charities. Central to the school's philosophy is the ethos of respect for all. Assemblies are used very effectively to celebrate cultural diversity, within and beyond the school community, in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Provision for girls' welfare, health and safety is outstanding. Child protection arrangements are robust. All staff, including the designated child protection officer, have received relevant child protection training at the appropriate level. All staff are thoroughly trained in fire safety and in first aid. Health and safety procedures are clear and guidance is implemented very effectively. Good quality risk assessments

are carried out for fire safety, the premises, educational visits, and off-site activities. Girls say that they feel safe in school and that they are exceptionally well cared for at all times. They report that there is no bullying and they are free from harassment, and that the school is a small close-knit community where they all help and look after each other. Admission and attendance registers meet requirements. Girls have opportunities to keep fit through physical education lessons and most bring a healthy lunch with them to school.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

All of the required recruitment and vetting checks have been carried out on staff, proprietors and others. The single central record contains all of the required information.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The school has completed a refurbishment programme for the current temporary premises which ensures staff and girls are kept safe, secure and comfortable. The school is warm and welcoming with colourful displays of individuals' art work displayed throughout. Lighting, decoration, heating, ventilation and floor coverings are all of a good quality. Bright and colourful classrooms provide a good learning environment where students and staff are comfortable. There is immediate access to an adjacent park and play area which are available for students' supervised use. The school has an agreement for the use of sports facilities at a nearby school. There are adequate numbers of toilets and washrooms.

Provision of information

The school meets all requirements for the provision of information to parents, carers and others. A detailed school prospectus, and the school's website, provide or make available, all of the necessary information.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The complaints procedure meets statutory requirements.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

What the school could do to improve further

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

- Ensure that the girls have opportunities for significant exercise if there is no physical education lesson in a particular week.

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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School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Muslim day school		
Date school opened	12 October 2009		
Age range of pupils	11–16 years		
Gender of pupils	Female		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 28	Total: 28
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,500.00		
Address of school	133 Hendon Broadway London NW9 7DY		
Telephone number	020 3210 4099		
Email address	headteacher@ughs.org.uk info@ughs.org.uk		
Headteacher	Noora Bashir		
Proprietors	Aisha Bello and Noora Bashir		

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



24 November 2012

Dear Girls

Inspection of Dar Al-Huda High School for Girls, London NW9 7DY

It was a real pleasure and privilege to spend two days in your school. I was impressed by the warm and welcoming atmosphere and the warm welcome from all the staff in your school. I judge that you get an outstanding education and all government requirements are met. Highly effective teaching and a rich curriculum ensure you make exceptional progress both academically and in your personal development.

What impressed me most was the fact that you were all working very hard, focusing on your learning and making the most of the opportunities you are offered. When I spoke with you, you were all very mature in your attitudes to work, polite and considerate of each other. Your behaviour was excellent. This is very pleasing.

It was also very good to see that you appreciate your teachers' hard work and the exceptional way that they look after you. I was very impressed by the time and energy they give to preparing outstanding lessons and helping you to prepare for your future life. I hope you will continue to appreciate them and work with them. As a teacher it is very rewarding when students work hard and enjoy a teacher's subject.

I have made one suggestion for improvement, which you and your teachers and proprietors can consider:

- ensure that you have regular significant exercise when there is no opportunity for physical education in a particular week.

Yours sincerely

Flora Bean
Lead Inspector