

Jaamiatul Imaam Muhammad Zakaria Boarding School

Welfare inspection report for a boarding school

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools, in order to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided.^{1,2}

Information about the school

This is an independent boarding school for Muslim girls aged from 11 to 21 years. There are 480 pupils on roll and they are all boarders. The school site, a Grade 2 listed building, was a former hospital. It consists of a number of separate buildings, four of which are used for boarding accommodation. The school is situated in its own grounds in a semi-rural area of Clayton, Bradford.

The boarding provision was last inspected in March 2010. The education provision was last inspected in March 2011.

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents.

² www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for boarders	outstanding
Quality of boarding provision and care	good
Boarders' safety	outstanding
Leadership and management of boarding	good

Overall effectiveness

The key findings of the boarding inspection are as follows.

- The overall effectiveness of the school's boarding provision is good.
- The outcomes for boarders are outstanding. Boarders significantly benefit from their stay at the school. Staff ensure boarders' cultural and religious needs are well met and offer life enriching experiences throughout their stay. This has a positive impact on their quality of life and personal development.
- The boarding provision is effectively and efficiently run for the benefit of the boarders. There are good overall checks to ensure the boarders are cared for properly and safely. The headteacher provides strong leadership and the Board of Trustees provide rigorous monitoring in relation to the boarding provision.
- Relationships between boarders and staff are very warm, respectful and caring. Care is of a consistently good quality and tailored to the individual needs of the boarders. A boarder said that nothing could be better and described the boarding experience as 'perfect'.
- The safety of boarders is given a high priority. Excellent safeguarding arrangements support staff to understand and keep boarders safe from harm. Boarders said they feel very safe and well cared for.
- The boarding houses are suitably furnished and provide a comfortable, welcoming environment.
- Equality and diversity is well promoted. The school is organised in a way that enables boarders to have support that meets their individual needs.
- Communication between parents and staff is excellent. Parents are confident about the positive care provided. They say staff are always contactable and they

consider the school is a 'Beacon in the community'.

- Boarders are tremendously positive about their boarding experience. They thoroughly enjoy their friendships with other boarders and consistently say how privileged they feel to be part of the school community. The ethos of the boarding is one of calm where boarders have a lively spirit and relish their opportunities and time at the school.
- The school meets all of the national minimum standards. The boarding provision has areas of strength and no weaknesses which have a direct impact on the outcomes for residential pupils. Points for further improvement relate to staff training, use of CCTV cameras in the bedroom corridors, additional bedroom space to increase levels of privacy, review the action taken following an accident and maintenance of refrigerators used by boarders.

Outcomes for boarders

Outcomes for boarders are outstanding. They significantly benefit and flourish from the individual support and care they receive at the school. Boarders develop their self-esteem and confidence through positive interaction with staff and other boarders at the school.

Boarders receive a holistic boarding experience that supports them to develop their life and independence skills. They have purposeful support to undertake work experience tasks in the school, residence and external workplaces. This includes caring, banking, teaching and domestic duties. Additionally, boarders benefit from substantial support to help develop their depth and understanding of their Islamic faith. School staff are often former pupils of the school and have extensive knowledge and understanding about school life. This provides boarders with reassurance, sound advice and guidance to assist them make sound choices during their stay and for their future.

Boarders are unquestionably positive about their boarding experience. They form trusting relationships with staff who value them as individuals. A boarder said 'staff are aspirational for us' and 'it's really safe and a great place to be.' Boarders also develop strong and respectful friendships with each other which lead to successful and positive friendships. They comment about how fortunate they are to meet and integrate with boarders from other countries and of different nationalities. They consider this a highly valuable experience that broadens their outlook and understanding of others.

Parents said they trust the school implicitly with the care of their child and enthuse about the very positive social and academic outcomes they achieve. A parent said 'staff are nurturing and give guidance about the way to behave in society and encouragement with studies.' Another parent said 'I am very positive and passionate about the school'. A boarder said 'It's brilliant, we're really well looked after and staff

always have time for us.'

A number of boarders are members of the school council. This gives them a substantial voice and the opportunity to act on behalf of others to bring about change. For example, they now have more choices in activities at the weekend and the opportunity to listen to daily radio news bulletins. Boarders are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms. They make their bedrooms bright and colourful with their own bed linen and have displays of small personal items on walls or shelves. This helps to make the residence more homely.

Boarders' health and well-being is effectively supported by an informed staff team. Contact with health professionals, in particular the school nurse and local doctor's surgery ensures boarders have access to appropriate medical advice and care.

The school offers many opportunities for boarders to keep fit and healthy. They participate in a broad range of physical activities which benefits their health and well-being. Boarders said they thoroughly enjoy playing football, badminton and jogging in the school grounds. Boarders said they delight in using the school grounds for activities as there is a pleasant open field aspect bordering the school.

Quality of boarding provision and care

The quality of the boarding provision and care is good. Boarders benefit from a mutually respectful and nurturing environment. The boarding staff are also part of the academic staff and ensure that boarders are given the level of support necessary for good pastoral care.

Staff approach was seen to be warm and very caring. This enables boarders to develop and experience a sense of security and feelings of belonging to the school. A boarder said they want to stay at the school as long as possible and they feel the staff and other boarders are their extended 'family'.

A well-planned, informative induction process means new boarders are looked after by friendly staff and have the benefit of mentors who are established boarders. Boarders comment on how well they settled in to the school and found the other boarders to be helpful and understanding. Overseas boarders said they 'love' boarding and it is one of the best experiences they have had.

The boarding provision is well organised and provides boarders with consistency of care. Good routines are part of boarding school life. This supports boarders to have structure and focus both with learning and in their free time. They are mindful of their boarding duties and they really look forward to the time they spend in the company of other boarders.

The boarding provision is suitably furnished and personalisation of bedrooms means colourful and pleasant accommodation. Boarders benefit from an on-going

programme of refurbishment in the boarding provision. The majority of boarders are in shared bedrooms. One bedroom has 10 beds which means boarders have limited privacy and personal space. All boarders have access to a telephone and are able to contact their families.

Boarders feel secure and safe at the school with different security measures in place. A CCTV security system operates at the school with the majority of cameras observing the external site. However, some cameras are located in the bedroom corridors which does not fully observe the boarders' privacy.

Boarders are cared for by staff who encourage them to lead a healthy lifestyle through good diets and regular exercise. Food is plentiful, varied and freshly prepared to meet the religious, cultural and the individual needs of boarders. However, the refrigerators used by boarders for storing food are not well maintained. Mealtimes are very social and well-ordered occasions. The school ensure boarders are well informed about personal development and health matters. This includes a whole school approach through the personal, social and health education programme.

Boarders have access to a range of varied and meaningful opportunities and experiences. Staff are motivated for boarders to reach their full potential and promote their involvement in social inclusion. They participate in different aspects of school, community and local life. This includes use of the school facilities and visits to places of interest such as historical and religious venues. Boarders said they enjoyed recent work experience in a local older people's care home and visits to museums.

Robust procedures help to ensure good management, secure storage and administration of medication. Boarding staff are first aid trained and nominated staff have undertaken training in medication administration. When boarders are unwell or have a minor accident the school keeps accurate records and any incident is managed in accordance with parents' wishes and consents. A number of injuries have occurred through participation in sporting activities. Although initial first aid is given in a timely fashion, it appears that there has on occasion been a delay in making the decision for boarders to attend hospital to eliminate any underlying injuries. However, the reasons for this delay are not clearly documented.

Boarders' safety

The arrangements for safeguarding boarders' welfare are outstanding. Boarders' welfare is paramount and staff are dedicated to provide them with safe and secure care. The headteacher and head of care have purposeful contact with safeguarding agencies to ensure accurate and up-to-date information and guidance is available to staff.

Boarders said they feel extremely safe while staying at the school. They confirm staff listen to them and they have people independent of the school to talk to should they

have any matters of concern. A boarder said 'elder students help the younger ones and we are all friends.' Boarders are confident in their contact with independent listeners who they consider provide an invaluable service and regularly visit the school. They said they are easily contactable and approachable. Boarders said they have absolutely no complaints about their care at the school. They unreservedly talk about how well the staff care for them.

Safety is at the forefront of the school's practice and site development. All staff receive child protection training and updates so that they are confident and well informed to deal properly with any safeguarding matter. The school has substantial risk assessments for all aspects of safety of the premises, grounds and boarders' activities. Robust accident monitoring, regular checks and on-site security helps to ensure areas are free from avoidable hazards. Parents said they consider staff are proactive and committed to keep their children safe.

Boarders and staff have an extensive understanding of the fire safety precautions. Professional advice is consistently sought to ensure comprehensive fire safety measures are in place. Boarders and staff participate in regular fire drills and there are routine checks of all fire safety equipment. Exhaustive checks relating to potential hazards are carried out such as those of gas, water and electrical safety. This upholds the safety and welfare of boarders, staff and visitors at the school.

Effective recruitment procedures mean those responsible for staff employment are aware of recruitment best practice. This helps to ensure boarders are looked after by suitable staff and are protected from potential abuse. Staff promote boarders safety and ensure they are exceptionally well informed about keeping safe both on and off the school site.

There have not been any incidents of boarders going missing from the school. However, staff understand how to implement the missing from school procedures if there were to be an episode. Bullying is not an issue in this school. A boarder said 'we feel safe, staff are like substitute parents and we're all friends.'

Boarders' positive behaviour is exceptional and is built on self-respect with time set aside each day for Islamic activities. They are encouraged to make good social choices to strengthen their interpersonal relationships and achieve success in school. Boarders feel valued and thrive in a calm and supportive environment. Boarders talk enthusiastically about the rewards and celebration system which supports them to develop their social skills.

Leadership and management of boarding

The leadership and management of the boarding provision are good. The boarding is effectively and efficiently managed. The headteacher is fully involved with the boarding aspect of the school and is supported by the head of boarding. The management team have a high level of awareness about how the boarding aspect is

operating. This helps to ensure the provision runs smoothly and for the benefit of the boarders. There were no recommendations made at the last inspection.

Sufficient experienced staff are on duty who are fully committed to provide the boarders with continuity of care, appropriate support and clear boundaries. Boarders benefit from warm and caring relationships with the staff who understand their diverse needs. Boarders said they consider staff listen to them, treat them fairly and are aspirational for them to achieve.

Boarders are looked after by a motivated and enthusiastic staff team who provide them with equality of care and have their best interest at heart. Boarders confirm there are many staff available to care for them throughout the school day and in boarding time. They said they feel valued and respected by staff and very much enjoy their boarding experience. Boarders' said 'this is a very special place', 'it's the best experience you could ever have' and 'the staff are excellent, the headteacher is like mum.'

The school's statement of principles and practice is shared with parents so that they are well informed and aware of the care their child receives as a boarder. The spiritual and inspirational aims of the school are an important thread that runs throughout the school and boarding provision.

Boarding staff have an appropriate induction to their role and access to in-house training. All relevant policies applicable to boarding are accessible and understood by the staff. This helps to ensure staff are familiar with practice and procedures to promote boarders' welfare. However, staff have limited access to further professional training in relation to the care and support of young people. The headteacher confirms efforts are being made to source suitable staff training from a recognised professional body.

Boarders receive good support from staff who are well supervised for their role. This enables staff to be up to date with boarding matters and to receive on-going mandatory training such as first aid, safe handling of medication and fire safety.

Parents said their communication with staff is excellent. They feel welcome at the school and are kept informed about their child's welfare. The management team provide good monitoring of the quality of the boarding provision. The headteacher ensures there is continuous improvement in the service which brings about outstanding outcomes for pupils.

The Board of Trustees have a good overview of how the school and boarding provision is run. They meet regularly and receive reports that reflect how the service is managed and take action as necessary. The school's development plan is thorough and clearly shows progress made and future planned improvements, for example on-going boarding refurbishment and completion of a new school building.

National minimum standards

The school meets the national minimum standards for boarding schools.

What should the school do to improve further?

- review the use of CCTV cameras in the proximity of boarders bedrooms, in respect of intrusion and their privacy
- ensure the sleeping accommodation provides boarders with sufficient privacy
- provide staff with appropriate training to develop their skills and knowledge relevant to the care and welfare of boarders
- ensure refrigerators for the storage of boarders own food are well maintained, in particular the shelving
- ensure there is no delay in the decision for a boarder to attend hospital following an injury; should this occur then ensure the reasons for this are clearly documented.

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.



27/11/2012

Dear boarders

Inspection of Jaamiatul Imaam Muhammad Zakaria Boarding School

Thank you so much for all your help and kindness shown to us during the inspection of the boarding provision of your school. We were very impressed with your respectful and helpful attitude to us and others.

We found an excellent level of safety at the school which helps to ensure you are kept safe. We also established that outcomes for all the boarders are excellent. You have strong support from staff who care about you and want the best for your future. It was fantastic to be able to speak to so many of you. You said you feel safe and well cared for just like one big 'family'.

You have lots of people to talk to at school and you say they listen to you. You use the school council well and told us how some of the weekend activities have improved because of your input.

We really enjoyed our lunch at the school and had a great time talking to you. The meal was delicious and we know you consider the food is really good and healthy too. Staff encourage you to have a healthy lifestyle so that you keep fit and well.

You all carry out different duties in the boarding houses and consider this a privilege. The boarding houses are kept very clean and tidy which makes them a comfortable and pleasant place to stay. We know there is on-going refurbishment in some of the houses.

To benefit you further we have asked the school to make some improvements. This includes more training for boarding staff, to reconsider the use of CCTV cameras in the bedroom corridors and improve privacy in bedrooms. We want staff to be quick to make a decision about whether you have a hospital check-up following an accident and make sure the reasons for any delay are documented. We have also asked that the refrigerators you use for storing food are kept in good condition.

We really enjoyed meeting you and spending time in your school. Thank you again for such a pleasant experience.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Walker / Angela Whiteley