

Tauheedul Islam Boys' High School

Robinson Street, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 5PE

Inspection dates

25–26 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Students achieve outstandingly well. The proportion of students making better progress than expected from their individual starting points is exceptionally high.
- All groups of students, including those known to be eligible for the pupil premium support, those who speak English as an additional language, disabled students and those with special educational needs, make outstanding progress.
- Students achieve outstandingly well because teaching is consistently good with much that is outstanding.
- Teachers expect the students to work hard and give of their very best. They are rarely, if ever, disappointed with the response.
- The school is exceptionally successful in developing students' speaking and communication skills.
- Although the vast majority of activities that are set for students in lessons stretch them fully, occasionally the level of challenge could be higher.
- While most marking and comments on students' written work are of high quality, some feedback does not give clear enough advice about what students need to do to improve their work.
- Students say that they feel exceptionally safe in school. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. Attendance levels are exceptionally high.
- Leaders and managers at all levels, including the local governing body and the Trust, provide the school with an exceptionally sharp view of where the school is heading and how to get there.
- Leaders' systems to check on students' progress are meticulous and they are highly effective in improving the quality of teaching.
- Parents are exceptionally supportive.
- A wide range of activities ensures that students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of the highest quality.
- The school prepares students exceptionally well for future success and life in a multicultural society.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons. Three observations were carried out jointly with the Executive

Principal and the Vice Principal. An inspector also observed reading sessions at the start of the school day. Inspectors scrutinised examples of students' written work in English, mathematics and science.

- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation including: the school's summary of its own performance; development planning; information on students' progress and achievement; records and policies relating to behaviour and safety; records of the monitoring of teaching and learning; and minutes of meetings of the local governing body.
- Inspectors met with senior staff and middle leaders, three members of the local governing body, the Chief Executive of the Trust, two groups of students and a group of parents.
- Inspectors took account of 99 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and 31 completed staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Stephen Wall, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Osama Abdul Rahim	Additional Inspector
Andrew Williams	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This free school opened in September 2012 as part of the Tauheedul Free Schools Trust. It has not been previously inspected.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school but a rapidly expanding 11–18 academy. Currently it has 254 students in Years 7, 8 and 9.
- The school is housed temporarily in a former junior school building.
- Nearly all students are of Asian heritage, mainly Indian or Pakistani. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium support is average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for students who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and children looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is below average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- There are no public examination results by which to measure the school's performance against the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The leadership and management of the school are shared between a Chief Executive and an Executive Principal.
- The school has a local governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that all teaching is as good as the best to raise achievement even further by:
 - ensuring that learning activities provide students with consistently high levels of challenge
 - ironing out inconsistencies in the quality of marking and feedback to students so that they receive regular advice on how to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Students achieve outstandingly well from their generally average starting points. They strive to live up to the high expectations and targets that the school sets for them.
- Attainment in all year groups is well above that normally expected for students' ages. School data, confirmed by inspection evidence from observing teaching, talking to students and scrutiny of written work, show that the proportion of students making better progress than expected from their starting points is high in English and mathematics and most other subjects. In English and mathematics, over 80% of students are making better-than-expected progress.
- The achievement of the most able students is outstanding. Their literacy and numeracy skills are well above those normally found in most students of their age.
- School data also show, again confirmed by inspection evidence, that students eligible for the pupil premium, including those eligible for free school meals, achieve as well as their classmates in English and mathematics. An earlier small gap in mathematics achievement between pupils eligible for the pupil premium and their peers triggered intensive action that has closed the gap successfully and quickly.
- Students who speak English as an additional language make outstanding progress because of the intensity and effectiveness of the support that they receive.
- Students who are disabled or with a statement of special educational needs make very rapid progress from their individual starting points because their needs are identified accurately and extensive support and intervention are quickly put into place. The rapid and sustained progress that all groups of students make testifies to the school's strong and successful commitment to providing equality of opportunity.
- The school is highly successful in developing students' speaking and communication skills. This is a school that, consciously, has talking at the root of its activities. Consequently, students learn to talk confidently and express themselves articulately.
- Reading is promoted exceptionally well. Students are required to read every day in school and the vast majority read extensively at home. They talk knowledgeably about their favourite authors and the reasons for their choices.
- Most students write with a maturity that belies their age. Some of the writing seen in Year 9 books would not be out of place in a sixth form.
- Rigorous and successful actions, including a compulsory two-week summer school for targeted students, has rapidly improved students' progress in mathematics from good to outstanding. Work in students' books shows that nearly all are working at levels that are above those normally expected for their age.
- The school makes highly effective use of the Year 7 catch-up funding to support those students who join the school with low levels of reading and numeracy skills. School data show that, as a result, all make rapid progress in developing these essential skills.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching is never less than good, with much that is outstanding. Teachers' detailed planning includes the selection of activities that stimulate students' interest and keep them fully engaged in their learning.
- Teachers expect the students to work hard. Little or no time is wasted so that students learn extremely well and respond with an eagerness to give of their best.
- Teachers are exceptionally skilful, for example, in posing questions that require students to think hard. Students' responses are almost always thoughtful and thought provoking. They give extended answers and reasons for their conclusions without having to be prompted. In a Year 9 English lesson, students responded with mature and extended answers to probing questioning about the relative writing styles of two separate texts. Skilful questioning took the students on a

step-by-step path to appreciating the quality of writing and what made one text more effective than the other. The quality of students' answers testified to the outstanding progress that they made.

- Most learning activities are very challenging, in keeping with the high aspirations that teachers have for their students. Students enjoy rising to the challenging work that they are set. They contribute eagerly and comment on each other's work sensitively and maturely.
- On a few occasions, work is not as challenging and, although students remain eager to give of their best, they do not make consistently outstanding progress.
- Students pay close attention to ensure that they understand vocabulary and key words. Teachers check on students' understanding of these key words by expecting students to make active use of them when giving answers.
- Support teachers make an excellent contribution to the learning of students who are disabled or have special educational needs. They are trained exceptionally well and are therefore in a position to know the specific needs of individual students.
- Teachers mark students' written work regularly. However, the quality of feedback is inconsistent in making clear to students what they could do to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. Staff, parents and students are overwhelmingly positive about both behaviour and safety in the school.
- The students at Tauheedul are a pleasure to be with. They show genuine care towards each other and are naturally considerate, respectful and open-minded. Students behave sensibly with minimum adult supervision as they move around. Students say that any disruption to lessons is very rare. This view is supported by the school's records of behaviour over time.
- Students spoken with were very keen to point out how hard teachers work on their behalf. They appreciate the extra effort teachers put in for them, even when it means they have to attend additional lessons after school, and sometimes at weekends, if they are not on course to achieve their targets. 'We don't mind giving up our time if it means we do better at school. Our parents think this is good too,' was the opinion of one pupil.
- Students concentrate exceptionally well in lessons and strive to do their best at all times. They demonstrate a genuine pride in their work and in their appearance.
- Despite some inadequacies presented by the small building, students react positively. 'It's not the building that's important, it's the quality of what goes on inside it that matters,' was a typical view.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Students feel exceptionally safe in school. They are fully aware of the different types of bullying and are keen to point out that bullying is very rare. In fact, when asked, students find it difficult to think of even isolated incidents.
- Students are keenly aware of potential risks and how to avoid or deal with them. The school's work to raise awareness of the risks involved in using the internet and social networking sites is exemplary with both students and parents.
- Students' enjoyment of school and their desire to do well are reflected in exceptionally high levels of attendance. The vast majority of students have 100 per cent attendance records. There have been no fixed-term or permanent exclusions since the school opened.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The Chief Executive and the Executive Principal work exceptionally well together. They know exactly how successful the school can be and how to bring this about. They are supported by a very strong team of other senior leaders and middle managers. Staff morale is high across the school in pursuit of excellence.

- Leaders and managers at all levels ensure that the school is built on strong foundations of high expectations for every student and for everything it does.
- Procedures for monitoring and checking on the quality of teaching are rigorous. The outcomes are used to identify areas to improve and to provide appropriate high-quality professional development opportunities. Consequently, the quality of teaching is high and improving.
- Processes for managing the performance of staff, including support staff, are rigorous. They are linked closely to decisions relating to salary increases.
- Leaders and managers leave no stone unturned in checking on students' progress. They report the outcomes to parents and take swift action to make sure that early signs of underachievement are tackled promptly and effectively. Targets for the progress of every student are set deliberately high. Students rally to the challenge of achieving them.
- Members of staff who have responsibility for subjects and for aspects such as behaviour and attendance are involved fully and successfully in the drive for further improvement.
- The curriculum is academically based. As such, it meets the students' needs and is valued highly by parents. There is an outstanding range of enrichment activities that feed students' personal development, broaden their horizons and raise their aspirations. Students are encouraged to play an active role in the community. They raise impressive amounts of money for a wide range of charities and even run a food bank for local, deprived families. Activities such as these and the deeply spiritual life of the school result in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development that is second to none.
- Parents are strongly supportive of the school. 'As this was a new school with no track record of success, I was a bit uncertain about sending my son here. But I don't regret it one bit. I am delighted I made such an excellent choice. And so is my son. I thoroughly recommend it,' is an example of one parent's satisfaction, which is typical of many.
- The Trust keeps a very close eye on the school's development. It provides strong support to senior leaders in their efforts to make it outstanding.
- Procedures for safeguarding students are fully in place.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The local governing body is highly committed to the success of the school. It does not shy from asking searching questions to hold senior leadership to account. It is fully aware of data relating to students' achievement and demands results. Governors are fully aware of the quality of teaching and the impact of initiatives to improve it. They understand with pinpoint accuracy the school's systems for managing the performance of staff and are rigorous in implementing decisions relating to salary increases. They have a firm grasp on the finances of the school. They keep a close eye on the use of the pupil premium funding and seek evidence of its impact on the achievement of eligible students.
 - In brief, the local governing body is pivotal to the current success of the school and holds its leaders rigorously to account for maintaining and furthering the outstanding standards already achieved.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	138220
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	426041

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	254
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mohamed Isap
Chief Executive	Mr Mubaaruck Ibrahim
Executive Principal	Mrs Linda Thompson
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01254 918670
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