

Ghausia Girls' High School

1–3 Cross Street, Nelson, Lancashire BB9 7EN

Inspection dates

18 May 2016

Overall outcome

Independent school standards not met

Context of the inspection

- This inspection was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.¹
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection following the previous standard inspection which took place on 30 September to 2 October 2015.
- The Department for Education (DfE) rejected the school's action plan produced following the previous standard inspection.
- This inspection was conducted without notice to the school.
- Her Majesty's Inspector held meetings with the headteacher, who is also the head of mathematics; the deputy headteacher; the head of English; a group of pupils in Years 7 to 11; and governors, including the chair of the governing body. He toured the school accompanied by the headteacher and observed samples of teaching, learning and assessment and talked to pupils in an English and a mathematics lesson. He scrutinised policies, records of tracking of pupils' achievement, the single central record of safeguarding checks on staff and other documents to confirm compliance with the independent school standards. He reviewed the school's website.
- An external examination involving pupils in Years 9 to 11 took place during the first part of the morning of the inspection. Year 11 pupils were on study leave and only attended school for their examination on the day of the inspection.
- The DfE asked Her Majesty's Inspector to pay particular attention to child protection procedures and training for all members of staff as the DfE had received an allegation that raised possible concern about the effectiveness of the school's work around these aspects.

Main findings

Quality of education provided

- Leaders' actions to help the school meet the independent school standards mean that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved. Pupils are making faster progress than previously.
- Schemes of work and mid- and short-term plans have been revised in English and mathematics. These now include more opportunities for reading and different writing tasks.
- Training has been provided to help teachers understand how to help pupils to develop their wider writing and mathematics skills. It is too early to determine what difference this training has made.
- The improvement to English teaching, learning and assessment means that pupils are now better prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders have introduced a new system to track pupils' progress. While this system is still at an early stage, it has already started to allow staff to reduce the risk of pupils falling behind.

¹www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/contents.

Training has been provided for staff to ensure that they know what is expected. Pupils know what they need to do to learn well.

- The information available about pupils' progress indicates that they have generally learned more quickly as the school year has gone on. However, the small numbers of pupils and relatively short timescale mean that there is insufficient evidence to lead to definite conclusions about pupils' outcomes.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- The safeguarding policy, revised during the previous standard inspection, has been adopted by the governing body. All members of staff have signed to confirm that they have read the policy, although the records of this are not kept in one document. This makes it harder for leaders to check that staff have done as required.
- Staff have received training about the new policy and about safeguarding more generally.
- The school's single central record of safeguarding checks meets requirements.
- Governors confirmed that they are aware of the allegation about child protection which the Department for Education had received. The inspection found no evidence to substantiate the possible concerns it raised. Leaders have taken specialist, professional advice in respect of fire safety. The fire safety arrangements including evacuation routes are sufficient and pupils no longer have access to the top floor of the building.
- Appropriate routines for checking equipment and for fire drills are in place. Evacuation routes are clearly displayed in all classrooms.
- A risk assessment policy has been written. This provides appropriate information about risk assessment and a suitable framework for effective use of risk assessments. The inspector observed staff following the planned actions agreed to reduce risk when pupils go off-site at the start of a visit by pupils to a local library.

Premises of and accommodation at schools

- It is not possible for pupils to play outside while remaining on the school site.
- Pupils are taken to a local park to play when the weather is good enough. However, this is infrequent; pupils indicated that this typically happens no more frequently than once a fortnight.

Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- A new governing body has been formed. The governing body includes people with a range of relevant experience, including the chair of another governing body, and others who are teachers or governors in other schools and colleges.
- The governing body is still at a relatively early stage of its development. However, it meets frequently and discusses relevant matters.
- Governors receive information about the effectiveness of the school, including pupils' achievement. Members ask the headteacher and other leaders to explain the school's work. This means that the governing body is starting to hold leaders and other staff to account and to provide challenge to ensure that the pupils succeed.
- Most of the actions in the school's action plan have been put in place. However, governors have not ensured that the impact of these actions has been evaluated.
- The proprietor has not commissioned an external review of governance. While this has not slowed the development of the new governing body, it is important that such a review is completed to provide information to the governing body on the success of its early stages and guidance for its further development.
- While the roles of governors and senior leaders are now understood by those involved, these have not been set down in written role specifications. This means that there is a risk that important aspects could be missed.
- The proprietor is not a member of the governing body. It is not sufficiently clear how he works with the governing body and leaders to fulfil his responsibilities.
- Leaders have established links with a local outstanding school, Manchester Islamic High School for Girls (MIHSG). The headteacher uses this contact to discuss ideas and developments, and individual links between staff in both schools are being set up.
- Staff have attended training about effective approaches to teaching, learning and assessment

organised on behalf of the Association of Muslim Schools UK by MIHSG. Teachers have also taken part in training provided by Nelson and Colne College. While opportunities such as these have helped teachers to develop their knowledge and skills, and learning from them has been discussed with all teachers, they have not been tailored to address individual's particular needs.

- The school's website does not refer to the school's most recent inspection judgement. In addition, the website continues to use a logo which does not reflect the school's current Ofsted grade.
- The website does not contain a copy of the most recent inspection report, or a link to the Ofsted website to allow the report to be accessed easily.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements

- The proprietor must ensure that suitable outdoor space is provided in order to enable pupils to play outside (paragraphs 29(1) and 29(1)(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that, following an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act, a copy of the report of the inspection (if it has been sent to the proprietor) is published and maintained on the school's website, and provided to parents of each registered pupil, by any date specified by the body who conducted the inspection (paragraphs 32(1) and 32(1)(d)).
- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a) and 34(1)(b)).

Inspection team

David Selby, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- Ghausia Girls' High School is an independent school registered for girls between 11 and 16. There are currently 35 pupils on roll.
- The vast majority of pupils join the school at the beginning of Year 7 and do so from a number of local independent and maintained primary schools.
- Ghausia Girls' High School is located in a predominantly Muslim community of Nelson. The school is sited in a number of former residential properties.
- The school has operated since 1996.
- The aims of the school revolve around a need to provide an Islamic education that is relevant to the modern world, providing learners with the necessary skills to adapt and adjust to society.
- The school does not make use of off-site alternative provision.
- The school received its last standard inspection from 30 September to 2 October 2015.
- Since the previous inspection, a new governing body has been formed and the roles of headteacher and deputy headteacher established, replacing the previous joint headteacher role. The previous heads of English and mathematics have left the school and been replaced.

School details

Unique reference number	131337
Inspection number	10017770
DfE registration number	888/6033

This inspection was conducted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

Type of school	Islamic faith day school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	35
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mr Anwar Afzal
Chair	Mr Amir Saeed
Headteacher	Mrs Shabana Riaz
Date of previous school inspection	30 September – 2 October 2015
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,250
Telephone number	01282 699214
Email address	s-riaz@hotmail.com

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