

# Noorul Uloom

Markazul Uloom, Park Lee Road, Blackburn BB2 3NY

## Inspection dates

10 December 2019

## Overall outcome

**The school is likely to meet all the independent school standards when it opens**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 1. Quality of education provided

*Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(e), 2(2)(g), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i)*

- The current co-educational school has a well-established curriculum that is already successful. Leaders ensure that pupils gain experience in the different aspects required by the independent school standards (ISS), including linguistic, mathematical, scientific and technical, and human and social education. While pupils' experience in aesthetic and creative education fulfils the requirements of the ISS, it is narrower than that of pupils in many schools. Pupils study art but not music, apart from nasheeds (Islamic songs).
- The school's curriculum policy and schemes of work are clear and provide helpful details for staff. The schemes of work are currently very similar in both the girls' and boys' parts of the current school.
- The school has a well-planned programme for careers education. The school is working towards the Gatsby benchmarks for careers education.
- The school day is organised to provide secular education each morning and Islamic education each afternoon.
- The programme for the sixth form focuses on completing the Islamic education courses begun by students earlier in their school career.

*Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(h), 3(i), 3(j)*

- Teaching in the school is effective. Teachers are skilled at planning for pupils' learning. They are confident in their knowledge of the subjects they teach. Pupils gain in their knowledge and understanding. Pupils typically attain well in their GCSE examinations.
- Pupils show their confidence in their teachers by behaving well and participating in learning.
- Leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching as part of their checks that pupils are making progress.
- Leaders have ensured that the resources pupils need are available. Most classrooms

are equipped with computer projection equipment and up-to-date text books are used in class.

*Paragraph 3(g), 4, 32(1)(f)*

- Pupils in Year 7 are assessed on entry to the school. Leaders use information from these assessments to set their expectations for pupils' academic success.
- The school uses formal assessments three times each year. These include annual end-of-year examinations. The results of these assessments form part of the feedback given to parents and carers in the parents' mornings that take place twice a year and in the annual written report to each parent. The reports also include details of other aspects such as pupils' attitudes and attendance.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

*Paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(ii), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi), 5(b)(vii)*

- The school's faith ethos provides a framework for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. There is a comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education for pupils in key stages 3 and 4. This is in addition to the opportunities taken by teachers for pupils' wider development during teaching of the school's faith curriculum. Leaders check carefully that the content of the taught programme includes all aspects of SMSC.
- Leaders ensure that pupils develop a strong sense of respect for all. This forms part of pupils' self-assessment within the school's tarbiyah (personal development and character) programme. Pupils work as teams to raise money for charities and to support the school.
- Leaders provide training for staff to help them include important values such as tolerance and democracy into their teaching. Pupils accept the differences between each other.

*Paragraph 5(c), 5(d), 5(d)(i), 5(d)(ii), 5(d)(iii)*

- Leaders ensure that staff are aware of the need for them to be politically neutral, for example, by ensuring that speakers visiting the school do not express political opinions or views.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

*Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)*

- The school's safeguarding policy provides clear information on how to protect pupils. It includes details of who people can contact, in and out of school, if they have any concerns about a pupil. Leaders made two minor amendments during this inspection to ensure that this policy fully meets the latest requirements from the Department for Education (DfE) about keeping pupils safe.
- The designated senior leader for safeguarding matters has had suitable and recent training to support her in this role. The training for all leaders who have specific safeguarding roles is updated regularly.

- Training for all staff about safeguarding is provided annually for all staff and updated as needed.
- The school has requested permission to admit students aged up to 23. Currently, there are no pupils aged over 19. The safeguarding policy does not consider the potential additional risk that having adult students in the same school as much younger pupils might bring. Leaders know that this aspect must be considered before they allow students to continue their studies as adults.

*Paragraph 9, 9(a), 9(b), 10*

- The school's behaviour policy sets out how all staff will encourage pupils to behave well. The approach taken by staff is successful. Pupils behave well and try hard in lessons. Very few instances of poor behaviour are recorded by the school.
- Bullying is a very uncommon feature of the school. The school's expectations of pupils and staff are clearly set out in the anti-bullying policy. Staff quickly pick up any circumstances that could turn into bullying. These are carefully recorded so that leaders can make sure that there has been a suitable follow up with pupils and, if necessary, their parents.

*Paragraph 11, 12, 13, 16, 16(a), 16(b)*

- The school has a brief health and safety policy. This is underpinned by more detailed policies, for example about fire safety and first aid.
- The school has a risk assessment policy. This is supported by a range of relevant risk assessments. These provide helpful information to help staff keep pupils safe.

*Paragraph 14*

- The proprietor intends that the same staff team that currently teaches girls will continue to teach at the school if it becomes a separate school for girls. There are sufficient staff to ensure that pupils are properly supervised.

*Paragraph 15*

- The school's admission register is kept electronically. This contains all the required information about pupils. Attendance registers are taken at the start of morning and afternoon school. Leaders have ensured that any absence is recorded using the correct codes. Pupils' overall attendance is around the national average for all secondary schools.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met.

**Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors**

*Paragraph 17, 18(1), 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(i), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(c)(iii), 18(2)(c)(iv), 18(2)(d), 18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(1), 19(2), 19(2)(a), 19(2)(a)(i), 19(2)(a)(i)(aa), 19(2)(a)(i)(bb), 19(2)(a)(i)(cc), 19(2)(a)(i)(dd), 19(2)(a)(ii), 19(2)(b), 19(2)(c), 19(2)(d), 19(2)(d)(i), 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(2)(e), 19(3), 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(i), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(iv), 21(3)(a)(v), 21(3)(a)(vi), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(a)(viii), 21(3)(b)*

- The school's system for checking on the suitability of staff to work with pupils is thorough. All the required checks are completed before members of staff start their employment at the school. The checks completed include those needed on the

members of the proprietorial body.

- Leaders keep one electronic record of the checks on adults working in both parts of the school. However, this is split into separate sections so that it is easy to refer to the details of staff working in either the girls' or the boys' parts of the school. This system is coordinated by leaders at the girls' site in the current school. Leaders intend to continue this system.
- No supply staff are employed to work at the school.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met.

#### Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

*Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 25, 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b), 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b), 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b)*

- The premises currently in use for the girls' education are housed in a converted hospital building. Much of the premises has recently been redecorated. Leaders are in the middle of two refurbishment projects in the building. One of these is improving the school hall. The other involves converting a classroom to provide more suitable facilities, including a new medical room. The school has sufficient space for the intended maximum number of pupils. The premises are well maintained.
- The lighting and acoustic conditions in classrooms are suitable. A new external lighting system has recently been installed. This means that all entrances and exits are well lit when it is dark. Suitable outside space is available for physical education and play.
- There are ample suitable toilet facilities for the sole use of pupils and a shower is available for pupils. The current medical room has a sink with hot and cold water with a toilet facility available across a corridor.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met.

#### Part 6. Provision of information

*Paragraph 2(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(c), 32(1)(d), 32(1)(g), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(i), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(i), 32(2)(d), 32(3), 32(3)(a), 32(3)(b), 32(3)(c), 32(3)(d), 32(3)(e), 32(3)(f), 32(3)(g)*

- Leaders have ensured that the information that they need to provide for parents and others is available. This includes a prospectus that clearly summarises the key features of the school.
- The school does not have a website. However, the school's safeguarding policy and all other policies are available on request from the school.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met.

#### Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

*Paragraph 33, 33(a), 33(b), 33(c), 33(d), 33(e), 33(f), 33(g), 33(h), 33(i), 33(i)(i)*

*33(i)(ii), 33(j), 33(j)(i), 33(j)(ii), 33(k)*

- The school's complaints policy includes all the details required by the independent school standards. For a number of years, there have been no formal complaints made about the girls' part of the current school.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met.

#### Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

*Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)*

- The proprietor and other leaders know about the ISS and the importance of meeting these. They have used the ISS as one of their tools to evaluate the effectiveness of the school. They know the current school well and understand what they need to do so that the new school can build on the previous success of girls' education in the mixed school.
- Leaders have used the time since the previous emergency inspection to prepare for the mixed school to be ready to split to become separate boys' and girls' schools. The required policies, systems and staffing are all in place.
- The headteachers and other leaders of the boys' and girls' parts of the current school work together closely. This helps them to check that they are being effective and allows for streamlining, for example, by producing common policies. Leaders recognise that the proposed change to the school may lead to greater differences in policies and approaches between the single-sex schools over time. However, leaders intend to continue to support each other's work.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met.

#### Schedule 10 of The Equality Act 2010

- Leaders have prepared a well-thought-out accessibility plan for the school. This indicates a willingness to make reasonable adjustments to the premises should these be required. At present the school has no pupils with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and no applications for admission to the school have been received from pupils with SEND. However, the plan also confirms that teachers will be expected to make changes to the way they teach to include pupils with SEND, if this situation arises.
- The proprietor has ensured that the requirements of The Equality Act 2010 are likely to be met.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school is likely to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## Proposed school details

Unique reference number	147604
DfE registration number	889/6016
Inspection number	10131338

This inspection was carried out under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards that are required for registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Islamic faith school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Markazul Uloom
Chair	Mr Muhammed Bilal Bawa
Headteacher	Mrs Imrana Kotwal
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,450
Telephone number	01254 581 569
Website	None
Email address	info@mugirls.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

## Provider already operating

Number of pupils of compulsory school age	184
Number of pupils of compulsory school age for whom an education, health and care plan is maintained under section 324, or who is looked after by a local authority	None
Total hours operating as a school per week	45
Total hours of teaching provided per week	39

## Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>	<b>Inspector's recommendation</b>
Age range of pupils	11 to 19	11 to 23	11 to 23
Number of pupils on the school roll (in the girls' section of the mixed school)	144	200	200

## Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>
Gender of pupils	Mixed (information below relates to the girls' section only)	Girls
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	119	175
Number of part-time pupils	None	None
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	None	None
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	None	None
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	None	None



## Staff

	<b>School's current position (in the girls' section of the mixed school)</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	5	5
Number of part-time teaching staff	31	31
Number of staff in the welfare provision	3	3

## Information about this proposed school

- The proprietor proposes that this girls' school is established by separating Markazul Uloom (MU), a mixed school, into two separate schools, one for boys and one for girls. Noorul Uloom (NU) will be the school for girls. MU was judged to meet the independent school standards (ISS) at the time of its previous standard inspection in July 2017. However, a subsequent emergency inspection in September 2019 found that pupils were separated by sex during their education and social time. As a result, some of the ISS were not met. Following this judgement, the proprietor decided to set up the single-sex schools. It is intended that both schools will have the same proprietor.
- MU is currently operating under its registration as a mixed school and providing education for both girls and boys but in separate units. Each part of the school has its own headteacher and team of staff.
- The proposed changes will not change the school's overall approach because boys and girls are already taught separately in different buildings and with entirely separate facilities. Both parts of the school are on the same site.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the DfE following the proprietor’s request to change MU from a single mixed school to two single-sex schools. This pre-registration inspection considered the proposed provision for girls in NU.
- The proprietor has also applied to the DfE for a material change for MU to allow it to become a school for boys only. A material change inspection of MU was carried out at the same time as this inspection. The outcome for this material change is reported in a separate inspection report. This was the school’s first pre-registration inspection.
- During this inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders of the girls’ school. Some of these meetings included leaders from both parts of the current school. They held a discussion with the proprietor about NU and MU. Inspectors toured the school’s buildings currently used for girls’ education, accompanied by the headteacher. Inspectors scrutinised policies and other information to check the school’s likely compliance with the ISS. The documents examined included the school’s safeguarding policy and record of checks on the suitability of staff. Inspectors visited lessons to gather evidence about teaching, learning, and pupils’ behaviour and attitudes.

## Inspection team

David Selby, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
David Roberts	Ofsted Inspector

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