

Inspection of Bolton Islamic Girls School

Weston House, Weston Street, Bolton BL3 2AW

Inspection dates: 6 and 8 July 2021

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel happy and safe at Bolton Islamic Girls School. They are very supportive of each other. Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that staff look after them well. They trust staff to help them with any worries they may have.

Pupils know that leaders expect the best from them in all that they do. Pupils make every effort to realise leaders' ambitions for them to become proud, British, Muslim young women. They work hard, developing confidence and self-assurance. They typically gain the qualifications they need to move to the next stage of their education when they leave the school.

Pupils behave well. They do not experience disruptions to their learning. This is because teachers deal with occasional instances of minor misbehaviour effectively. Pupils who met with inspectors said that bullying sometimes happens. However, they know that leaders take it seriously and respond strongly when it occurs.

Pupils enjoy a range of experiences beyond the formal subjects that they study. They have a say in choosing some of these. For example, before the pandemic, they persuaded leaders to enable them to take part in netball competitions. These will return when there are no local restrictions.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders show ambition in the curriculum that they provide. Pupils benefit from learning a wide range of subjects, including studies related to Islam. The curriculum is well designed, and the content is in a logical order. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. Some have high-level qualifications in their subject. They present pupils' learning clearly. As a result, pupils build their knowledge effectively and achieve well.

Across the span of subjects, teachers have effective ways of helping pupils to retain what they have learned. They review what pupils learned in the last lesson before they start on new learning. They give pupils small tests and quizzes to check what they have remembered.

There are formal assessments that pupils complete to see how well they have remembered a whole unit of work. Typically, these assessments focus on what pupils have recently learned. Sometimes, however, the assessments relate to knowledge that pupils have not yet met. This means that teachers do not get a clear enough picture of what pupils have remembered and how teachers will plan future learning.

Leaders regard reading as important and they find ways to develop all pupils' interest in it. Leaders assess how well pupils can read when they start in Year 7. Teachers use this information when planning lessons. However, a small number of pupils are not as fluent in reading as they should be. Staff do extra work with these pupils, which gives some support to improve pupils' fluency. However, adults do not have a wide enough range of methods to help these pupils to improve as quickly as

possible, such as knowing how to improve pupils' deeper understanding of what they read.

Pupils have positive attitudes to their work. Their good behaviour helps them to learn effectively. Pupils have high attendance, considering the effects of the current pandemic.

Year 11 pupils have now left the school. Leaders stated that this was because they had finished the curriculum.

Leaders provide a broad range of activities to enable pupils to extend their learning beyond the classroom. Pupils usually visit places of worship of other faiths. They enjoy clubs as varied as football and cryptography. They learn to respect others, regardless of their characteristics, through a planned programme of assemblies.

Pupils who need extra help, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), mainly receive the support they need. In a small number of cases, leaders have not worked out what pupils' needs are precisely enough. This means that there are a few occasions where the support that leaders provide is not as effective as it could be.

Leaders support staff effectively. They do what they can to keep teachers' workload at a manageable level. Staff who spoke to inspectors said that senior leaders are sensitive to their well-being.

The proprietor body has ensured that the school meets all the independent school standards. The school has well-maintained toilets and washing facilities for pupils. There are showers and a changing area for when pupils take part in physical education (PE). There is also a room to look after pupils if they are sick or injured.

Members of the proprietor body understand their roles and duties well. Leaders have set up a larger governing body, which includes the five members of the proprietor body. Governors have a wide range of expertise, such as health, education and law. They hold the headteacher to account for her work effectively. They constantly monitor whether the school is meeting the standards.

Leaders have all the documents in place that they should have. These include policies for health and safety, fire safety and first aid. They put these policies into practice effectively. There is a suitable safeguarding policy. Leaders have published this on the school's website.

Leaders have a suitable plan to enable pupils with disabilities to access the school. Leaders' planned actions include making adaptations to PE equipment and providing information using appropriate technology.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders complete the required checks on adults' suitability to work with pupils. They record this information appropriately.

Staff have a secure knowledge of how to recognise the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Leaders train staff regularly to keep their knowledge up to date.

Leaders responsible for safeguarding have up-to-date training specific to their role. They have strong processes in place to enable staff to report any concerns they may have about pupils. Leaders help pupils promptly. Leaders follow up any contact with agencies, such as social care, if they judge that those agencies are not acting quickly enough.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Occasionally, teachers' assessment strategies do not focus exactly enough on checking whether pupils, including those with SEND, understand their learning in order to inform teaching. This means that teachers do not know whether pupils have the knowledge that they need to build on their learning. Leaders should ensure that all assessment activities relate to what pupils have learned, so they can develop their knowledge securely.
- A few pupils are not as confident or fluent in reading as they should be. This can make it difficult for them to access the curriculum as fully as possible. Leaders need to strengthen staff's expertise in using a variety of reading strategies to help those pupils who find reading difficult, to read fluently and access confidently all subjects.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	138498
DfE registration number	350/6001
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10193328
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	120
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Makkah Academy Trust
Chair	Kamran Khan
Headteacher	Zakia Maqbool
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,700
Telephone number	01204 771 570
Website	www.boltonislamicgirlsschool.org.uk
Email address	info@boltonislamicgirlsschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 21 November 2019

Information about this school

- The school is an Islamic girls' school.
- The school's last standard inspection was from 19 to 21 November 2019. A progress monitoring inspection was conducted on 13 October 2020.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspectors spoke with the chair of the proprietor body, the headteacher and other school leaders.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in these subjects: English, history, mathematics and PSHE education. In each subject, they met with the subject leader and teachers. They visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors looked at the school's safeguarding policy and related policies and documentation. They checked the school's records of the suitability of staff to work with pupils. They talked with staff and pupils about safeguarding matters, pupils' personal development and pupils' behaviour and attitudes. They looked at a range of other policies and documents related to pupils' welfare and their education. They looked at pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors analysed 11 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. They considered 11 responses to the questionnaire for staff. They also evaluated 30 responses to the pupils' questionnaire.

Inspection team

Mark Quinn, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sue Eastwood

Her Majesty's Inspector

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