

Unity Girls High School

2 Boscobel Street, London NW8 8PS

Inspection date

20 September 2021

Overall outcome

The school does not meet the independent school standards relevant to the material change. The material change has already been implemented

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7

- This inspection identified concerns about the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe.
- Until the morning of the inspection, the school's safeguarding policy on its website paid regard to the outdated statutory guidance from 2016. Even when updated, the policy paid no regard to the latest statutory guidance on sexual violence and sexual harassment between children.
- Too much reliance is placed on staff completing generic online safeguarding courses. Leaders do not train staff enough to understand how to keep pupils safe, or about the school's context-specific risks to pupils. Staff spoken to during the inspection had little understanding of the latest government guidance.
- There is no documentation whatsoever identifying concerns or referrals made to external agencies because the inspector was told there have not been any. However, pupils talked about concerns they had, for example about the local area surrounding the new premises.
- There are significant safe staff recruitment and other safety failings, as identified below in Parts 4 and 5.

Paragraphs 11, 12, 14 and 16

- The school's health and safety policy is unfit for purpose, as it is an unedited template designed for maintained schools. Its content bears almost no relation to this school.
- Leaders have not completed a fire risk assessment of the new premises. They do not log all the required fire safety checks.
- Acceptable arrangements for the supervision of pupils are likely to remain suitable as numbers increase.

- Leaders have not written a risk assessment policy, nor produced a risk assessment for the new premises.
- Some of the independent school standards checked in this part are not met. These are listed in the annex to this report.

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

All paragraphs

- The single central record (SCR) is not compliant because it does not include all the required vetting checks on staff and the proprietor.
- Barred list checks are not being recorded on the SCR. In cases where staff have started working with an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check in process, the required barred list check has not been undertaken.
- Before this inspection, leaders were unaware of the need to carry out prohibition from teaching and prohibition from management (section 128) checks. Nobody in the school has been subject to these checks and they do not feature on the SCR.
- Until this inspection, leaders did not understand the need for additional overseas checks. Leaders do not have a procedure in place to undertake these checks.
- The SCR incorrectly records National Insurance numbers as evidence of staff members' right to work in the United Kingdom.
- Some of the independent school standards in this part are not met. These are listed in the annex to this report.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

All paragraphs

- The school's new premises comprise a small, two-floor building used also as both a supplementary school and a place of worship. There is enough classroom space in three areas, and suitable toilet, washing, changing and shower facilities, for up to a maximum of 40 pupils.
- The lighting and acoustics of the building are suitable. There is a suitably labelled drinking water supply.
- A catch on an upper-floor window is broken. As a result, the window opens dangerously wide.
- There is a medical room that meets requirements. However, the hot water supply at the sink gets far too hot because it is not regulated. This poses a scalding risk.
- There is no outdoor space on the premises. Leaders have not made arrangements for pupils to access outdoor play and recreation facilities routinely elsewhere.
- Some of the independent school standards in this part are not met. These are listed in the annex to this report.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1)(c)

- This requirement is met because the school's safeguarding policy is available online.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34

- Many of the independent school standards checked during this inspection are no longer met, including those relating to keeping pupils safe from harm.
- Leaders demonstrate a lack of knowledge of the requirements. They are not fulfilling their responsibilities effectively.
- The independent school standard in this part is not met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that are relevant to the material change, as set out in the annex of this report.

School details

Unique reference number	137784
DfE registration number	302/6015
Inspection number	10201758

This inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Islamic secondary day school for girls
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Nora Bashir
Headteacher	Nora Bashir
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,500 to £5,000
Telephone number	07730 747680 or 07730 747679
Website	www.ughs.org.uk
Email address	headteacher@ughs.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	5 to 7 June 2018

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16	No change	Not applicable
Number of pupils on the school roll	14/40	No change	Not applicable

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Girls	No change
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	11	No change

Number of part-time pupils	3	No change
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	0	No change
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	0	No change
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	0	No change

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	1	5
Number of part-time teaching staff	8	No change
Number of staff in the welfare provision	0	2

Information about this school

- Unity Girls High School is an independent secondary day school for girls of Muslim faith. The school is led by the sole proprietor, who is also the headteacher. There are no governors.
- The school relocated to its new, sole premises at 2 Boscobel Street, London NW8 8PS from 13 September 2021. The building is used by the owners (outside school hours during evenings and on Fridays and at weekends) for worship and as a supplementary school.
- Pupils in Year 11 attend the school three days a week only. The other pupils attend Monday to Thursday and on Friday mornings.
- The school makes no use of alternative provision.
- The school's most recent inspection was a full standard inspection in June 2018.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first material change inspection commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) to consider Unity Girls High School's application to make two material changes to its registration agreement. The requested changes were to relocate to new premises and originally to increase the maximum number of pupils to 60. During the inspection, the proprietor revised the desired maximum number of pupils to 40, which is the school's current maximum capacity.
- The inspection was conducted with two days' notice.
- The DfE requested that the inspector consider whether particular independent school standards contained within Parts 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 are met and likely to continue to be met if the material change is approved. The DfE also asked for the inspection to consider the issues raised in a complaint about the school's leadership.
- The inspector met with all pupils. He held meetings with the sole proprietor (who is also the headteacher) and the designated safeguarding lead. He also had separate meetings with three teachers and the school's administrator.
- The inspector toured the new premises and reviewed documentation, including that concerning safeguarding, health and safety, fire safety and risk assessment.
- There were no recent responses on Ofsted Parent View to consider.

Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
 - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

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

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
 - 18(2)(a) no such person is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act where that person is or will be engaging in activity which is regulated activity within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 4 to that Act;
 - 18(2)(b) no such person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction;
 - 18(2)(e) in the case of any person for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such a certificate is not sufficient to establish the person's suitability to work in a school, such further checks are made as the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

- 18(3) The checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) and (except where sub-paragraph (4) applies) (2)(e) must be completed before a person's appointment.
- 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is–
 - 21(3)(a) in relation to each member of staff ("S") appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether–
 - 21(3)(a)(ii) a check was made to establish whether S is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act;
 - 21(3)(a)(iii) a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction;
 - 21(3)(a)(vii) a check of S's right to work in the United Kingdom was made
 - 21(3)(a)(viii) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(e)
 - 21(3)(b) in relation to each member of staff ("S"), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 25 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.
- 28(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 28(1)(d) the temperature of hot water at the point of use does not pose a scalding risk to users.
- 29(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable outdoor space is provided in order to enable–
 - 29(1)(b) pupils to play outside.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school–

- 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
- 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
- 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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