

# Darul Uloom London School

Darul-Uloom London

Darul Uloom, Foxbury Avenue, Chiselhurst, Kent BR7 6SD

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this boarding school

This is an independent boarding school for boys. It is located in Chiselhurst and has a Muslim ethos.

The school is registered for 155 pupils aged from 11 to 19 and there are currently 142 pupils on roll. All 142 pupils board in accommodation that is located on the school premises. Most pupils return home every other weekend.

The school's last full inspection was an integrated inspection in June 2019. Since then, the school has had an emergency inspection in January 2020 and progress monitoring inspections in December 2020 and May 2021. These were all carried out alongside education colleagues. The head of boarding has been in post for three and a half years. He has an appropriate qualification.

This inspection was carried out at the same time as an inspection of the school.

### Inspection dates: 22 to 24 March 2022

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account**      **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected      good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers      good

The boarding school provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** requires improvement

**Date of last inspection:** 18 June 2019

## Inspection judgements

### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Boarding is a good experience for children at this school. The children say that they are well cared for. Children speak positively about the approachable staff and have good relationships with them.

The ethos of the school is to provide an Islamic studies curriculum alongside a broad secular curriculum. In addition to their Islamic studies, pupils are taught English, mathematics, science, history, Arabic, religious education, art, music and physical education. In most subjects, the quality of teaching means that children remember the key knowledge and skills they are taught. Most teachers are subject experts and deliver the planned curriculum effectively. Typically, teachers recap and reinforce children's understanding. Consequently, children receive a good quality of education and typically make good progress.

The staff and managers ensure that children's health needs are met well. Health records are clear. The staff know about children's allergies, and individual health plans are in place for children who need emergency interventions. Safeguarding leads are aware of how to refer children to services for mental health support. When children's behaviour indicates they may be in distress, safeguarding leads make referrals to additional support services.

Managers have ensured that a structure is in place to support children when they first arrive at the school. The staff are alert to potential anxieties that children may feel on arrival. To help with this, children are allocated a buddy. Children report that the staff and the older boys have helped them to settle well. Children say that one of the best things about boarding at the school is the friendships they make and the opportunities to spend time with their friends.

Children know how to raise concerns. A system is in place to respond to low-level concerns from families. Managers take appropriate action to resolve these concerns.

Children benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities. These include martial arts, cricket, swimming and astronomy. Staff support older children to attend job fairs. Children are expected to attend prayers throughout the day. Children understand that this is an expectation of the school and in line with the school's ethos.

The physical environment continues to need improvement. A plan is in place to refurbish bathrooms and toilets. There is a significant difference between areas that have been refurbished and those that have not. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the pace of refurbishment progress. In addition, at the time of the inspection, a small number of rooms had mould on the walls or ceiling, and many windows required cleaning. Senior managers responded to these issues during the inspection by cleaning the rooms and arranging for window cleaners to attend.

However, these issues should have been identified by the provider before the inspection without an external prompt.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: good**

Children can identify trusted adults at the school. Children know who the independent listener is, and they know how to contact them. This helps children to feel safe and secure in the boarding provision.

Managers ensure that recruitment procedures are safe. Managers keep good, clear records to demonstrate this. Appropriate checks are also in place for volunteers who work at the school, with the same level of scrutiny applied as for employed staff. This reduces the potential for inappropriate people to gain employment at the school.

The head of boarding has a good knowledge of safeguarding procedures and a good awareness of statutory guidance. There have been few safeguarding concerns identified, but the concerns sampled were clear, with appropriate actions taken to safeguard children.

Children say that bullying is not an issue. Children outline a positive sense of community and friendship. When individual incidents between children occur, these are appropriately managed. There have been no incidents requiring physical intervention.

A clear behaviour support policy and set of expectations are in place. These are understood by families and children. Managers implement a tiered approach to incidents. They sometimes use weekend detentions as a consequence. However, care is taken to ensure that children are not prevented from attending important family events.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The head of boarding has been in post since June 2018. He is also the designated safeguarding lead and carries out other day school responsibilities. He is calm and clear in his communication and considered in his approach. He is experienced and qualified to carry out the role.

The head of boarding ensures that staff receive appraisals and supervision. The staff feel supported and guided. The head of boarding receives similar support from the safeguarding trustee to guide him in his role.

Staff receive training in a good range of areas. This includes child criminal and sexual exploitation and prevent training, which is delivered by an external partner. Safeguarding leads have all had appropriate training to enable them to carry out their roles.

Managers have a good relationship with the local authority safeguarding leads. They have also forged links with the local police. Senior leaders have actively sought external input and scrutiny, which reduces the risk of an insular approach. Managers work positively with the chair of the school's parent teacher association. She reports a constructive and open relationship.

Managers ensure that, as part of the integrated curriculum, children learn about protective characteristics and diversity. This helps children to have a good understanding of diversity in the wider community.

Some children say they have developed skills that they believe will help them to become more independent, for example washing and ironing their clothes. However, management monitoring and oversight of children's independence are not yet well defined within boarding. The head of boarding has begun a process of consultation, reflection and review with children to explore this. These actions are in their infancy but have the clear potential to contribute to an improvement.

## **What does the boarding school need to do to improve? Recommendations**

- The registered person should ensure that monitoring of the decor of the residential provision is strong enough to enable maintenance issues to be addressed promptly and ensure that the environment is homely.
- The registered person should ensure that the programme of refurbishment continues at an appropriate pace, with particular regard to toilets, bathrooms and bedrooms.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people using the social care common inspection framework. This inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the national minimum standards.

## **Boarding school details**

**Social care unique reference number:** SC006927

**Headteacher/teacher in charge:** Mufti Mohammed Kamil Sheikh

**Type of school:** Boarding School

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## **Inspectors**

Ashley Hinson, Social Care Inspector (lead)

Mark Anderton, Social Care Inspector

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