

Al Jamiah Al Islamiyyah

Willows Lane, Bolton, Lancashire BL3 4HF

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this boarding school

Al Jamiah Al Islamiyyah was established in 1993 and is an independent boys' day and boarding school with a clear Islamic ethos and religious purpose. The majority of boarders are British Muslims of Bangladeshi or Pakistani heritage, although some children are European citizens living in this country.

The curriculum comprises Islamic studies, which are taught in the morning, and a secular curriculum, taught in the afternoon.

Many pupils remain at the school following their post-16 studies to complete their higher-level Islamic qualifications. This means some learners stay at the school between the ages of 16 and 25.

At the time of this inspection, there were 80 boarders under the age of 18 at the school. The inspectors only inspected the social care provision at this school.

The head of boarding has been in post since February 2023.

Inspection dates: 13 to 15 June 2023

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected **inadequate**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and widespread failures that mean that children and young people are not protected and their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor.

Date of last inspection: 11 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection:

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 16 May 2017

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

The leadership, management and governance of this boarding provision are inadequate. Children are not fully protected from the risk of harm. Significant and widespread concerns in respect of the safety and well-being of children were identified during this inspection. The arrangements for dealing with concerns about children's welfare are inadequate.

The environment where children board is not safe. The kitchen, bathroom and bedroom areas are unclean and poorly maintained. Foam mattresses are deteriorating, and protective covers are torn or missing in some cases. There is damage to walls and windowsills that has been identified by leaders but not rectified. Some damage poses a danger, such as a broken toilet and bedroom window and sharp edges where windowsills are broken. Many toilets and showers are out of use and in an extremely unhygienic condition. The dining room is a multi-use room that is dirty and in need of redecoration.

There is no effective programme of routine checks on the boarding environment. The person who oversees health and safety is untrained and is not supervised or supported. This is also the case for the kitchen hygiene supervisor and the fire safety officer. As a result of this lack of training and management oversight, there are no formal maintenance systems in place to ensure that the lead for health and safety knows about, and addresses, a range of outstanding matters related to health and safety. The photographic record of environmental shortfalls captured by leaders in May 2023 has not led to an action plan that is monitored for improvements. There are no employed cleaners. This has affected the hygiene, safety and comfort of the environment in all areas. There are dirty bedrooms, inadequate mattresses and a dirty kitchen with poor food hygiene. This poses a risk to children's health due to inadequate storage of food and non-compliance with a food hygiene report and actions from the environment agency visit in May 2023.

During the inspection, some staff carried out remedial cleaning in areas such as the kitchen and bathrooms. Despite this, the accommodation remains unsatisfactory in its cleanliness and decor.

The administration of medication is unsafe. Untrained staff administer medication. Medical records do not match the medication prescribed for children, and some medication is out of date. There is no pharmaceutical information to advise what specific medication is for. For example, one staff member believed that an item of medication was for diarrhoea when in fact it was for constipation. When children do not cooperate with their medication plan, the staff do not follow this up to ensure that children get the medication that they need. Furthermore, the medical officer is not supervised and there are no medication audits. Records of children's injuries are

poor. For example, the cause of an injury is not recorded, and when children are taken to hospital the outcome of that visit is not recorded.

The head of boarding told inspectors that consultation with children takes place every six weeks. However, there is no evidence of any consultation with children. There is no evidence of what action staff have taken in response to concerns that children have raised or in relation to the ideas that children have put forward.

Children told inspectors that they enjoy the social opportunities available to them in boarding. However, these are limited to football, cricket, pool, and board games. Smartphones are not allowed in either the school or the boarding accommodation. Children have access to two phones in the boarding accommodation, however, only one of these phones is working. This severely limits children's opportunities to call home and have contact with their families, and potentially reduces their time on the phone.

Despite these shortfalls, most children say that they enjoy staying in boarding. They told inspectors they enjoy being with their friends and have good relationships with the staff. They said that they were happy with the condition of showers and toilets, despite their poor repair and hygiene.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: inadequate

The lack of effective and well-led safeguarding systems obstructs action to ensure that children are safe. Leaders and managers do not demonstrate a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and statutory guidance and how they should be applied consistently to their practice. This results in a culture that does not respond effectively or appropriately to safeguarding concerns.

When an allegation relating to an incident of a serious nature was made by a child, staff failed to take the appropriate action. They failed to make a referral to the appropriate safeguarding agencies. This lack of effective action has put children at risk of harm and led to a delayed response by those safeguarding agencies responsible for taking timely and appropriate action.

Supervision of children is inadequate in the boarding accommodation. One member of staff supervises up to 80 children and sleeps overnight in the boarding house. In the event of an emergency, this staffing ratio compromises the safety of children. Children routinely mix with unsupervised and adult learners who have not all had Disclosure and Barring Service checks, which increases the risk of harm from unsuitable adults.

The arrangements for fire safety are not suitable. The fire risk assessment has not been actioned appropriately. Only the red risk level one areas which are the highest priority have been addressed, and there is no plan to rectify the other shortfalls identified by the fire risk assessment. Dormitory doors do not currently provide an effective barrier in case of fire. The school's fire officer is not responsible for

overseeing the action plan. Approximately half of staff have not had basic fire safety training, and the fire safety officer has only had fire marshal training. The fire officer demonstrated a poor understanding of the regulatory requirements for fire safety and sees his role only as ensuring that regular checks of equipment are completed and that fire drills are organised.

The pre-employment checks for new staff are not comprehensive and do not evidence safe recruitment practice. Leaders who carry out recruitment are not trained in safer recruitment practice. The required background checks on staff employed to work in the school are not always in place, such as a full employment history, validation of references and identity checks. This does not ensure that newly recruited staff are suitable and may place children at risk of harm.

During the inspection, children's behaviour was good. They were polite, respectful and considerate. However, there was graffiti and damage to the interior of the boarding provision, which suggests that this may not always be the case.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leaders and trustees do not ensure that procedures and practices are securely in place to ensure effective safeguarding and child protection. As a result, children are not protected from harm.

Several of the staff who have roles related to health and safety, maintenance and health are enthusiastic about their work. However, none of these staff have received appropriate training and there are no effective monitoring systems in place to regularly review any actions identified. This means that poor conditions persist, despite being known by trustees and the principal, and staff accept no responsibility for improving matters beyond reporting to the principal.

Leaders do not ensure that systems are in place to provide regular and effective formal supervision to boarding staff. This means they are unable to formally monitor the quality of the work of staff in the boarding provision. Practice issues and incidents are not discussed on a regular basis. This means that lessons cannot be learned to improve future practice and outcomes and experiences for children.

Several staff are new in their roles and have other responsibilities within the school. The head of boarding is not able to demonstrate the full range of leadership skills to support the staff team effectively. The impact of this can be seen in the lack of oversight of staff and lack of drive or capacity to address known failings, including those raised during the inspection. There is also a failure to keep formal records of any kind, and there are no systems in place to respond to any safeguarding concerns.

The level of monitoring by the trustees, including how the trustees hold the school to account, is poor. The quality of governors' meeting minutes is unsatisfactory. Minutes do not show the action taken by leaders when issues are raised and there are no

clear lines of accountability. Consequently, there has been a decline in standards and there are significant shortfalls in safeguarding practices. The quality of governance is not helping the school to improve.

What does the boarding school need to do to improve? Compliance with the national minimum standards for boarding schools

The school does not meet the following national minimum standards for boarding schools:

- The school's governing body and/or proprietor monitors the effectiveness of the leadership, management and delivery of the boarding and welfare provision in the school, and takes appropriate action where necessary. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 2.1)
- Senior boarding staff are knowledgeable and experienced and have undertaken appropriate training in the management and practice of boarding. They use this to ensure that boarders' welfare is safeguarded and promoted. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 2.6)
- Good quality sleeping accommodation is provided for boarders. It is well organised and managed with ongoing assessments of risk (which should be documented) and findings acted upon to reduce risk for all boarders. Accommodation gives boarders appropriate privacy, taking into account sex, age and any special requirements. Where children share a bedroom, they are able to express a preference about whom they share with. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 4.1)
- Good quality living accommodation and equipment, including appropriate internet access, is provided for boarders for the purposes of organised and private study outside school hours and for social purposes. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 4.2)
- Sufficient toilet and washing facilities with good quality fixtures and fittings and access to hot water are provided for boarders, are readily accessible from the sleeping accommodation and take into account sex, age and any special requirements. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 4.3)
- Good protection is provided for boarders' personal possessions and for any boarders' money or valuables looked after by the school. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 5.3)
- Good quality facilities are provided for the hygienic preparation, serving and consumption of boarders' main meals. These may be situated in the main school building provided it is adjacent to or reasonably accessible from the boarding accommodation. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 6.2)
- The school has, and implements effectively, appropriate policies for the care of boarders who have medical conditions and/or are unwell, ensures that the physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing of boarders are promoted and prompt action is taken when health concerns are identified. The policies include first aid, care of those with chronic conditions and disabilities, dealing with medical emergencies and the use of both prescription and non-prescription medication (including controlled drugs). Policies for administration of medication should

reflect, where appropriate, guidance provided by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and the Royal College of Nursing. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 7.1)

- All medication is stored safely and securely and accurate records are kept of its administration. Staff are properly trained to provide the support that pupils need when administering medicines. Prescribed medicines are given only to the boarders to whom they are prescribed. Boarders allowed to self-medicate are assessed as being sufficiently responsible to do so. Where applicable, schools have regard to government guidance. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 7.6)
- The school should ensure that: arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 8.1)
- The school should ensure that all staff are aware that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility throughout the school and the boarding facilities. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 8.2)
- The school ensures compliance with relevant health and safety laws by drawing up and effectively implementing a written health and safety policy. Staff undertake sufficient training to ensure the policy is followed in practice. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 9.1)
- The school premises, 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, and they are provided a safe environment in which they can live and learn. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 9.2)
- The school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and ensures alerting systems are accessible and there are clear evacuation plans for all children subject to their needs. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 10.2)
- Schools facilitate arrangements so boarders can contact their parents/carers and families in private, at a time that is suitable for both parties, considering relevant time zones for international pupils. Schools should operate proportionate systems to monitor and control the use of electronic communications in order to detect abuse, bullying or unsafe practice by boarders. Schools are sensitive and comply with individual children's circumstances such as restricted contact with families. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 12.1)
- Boarders are actively encouraged to contribute their views to the operation of boarding provision. There should be clear and easily accessible systems for boarders to provide their views and raise concerns. Boarders' views are considered in decisions about the running of the school and boarding provision and boarders are provided with feedback about their expressed views. Boarders are not

penalised for raising a concern in good faith. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 13.1)

- Schools operate safer recruitment and adopt recruitment procedures in line with the regulatory requirements and having regard to relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 19.1)
- Any staff member or volunteer employed or volunteering in a position working with boarders has a job description reflecting their duties, receives induction training in boarding when newly appointed, and receives regular reviews of their boarding practice, with opportunities for training and continual professional development in boarding. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 20.1)
- The staff supervising boarders outside teaching time are sufficient in number, training and experience for the age, number and individual needs of boarders, and the locations and activities involved. (Boarding schools: national minimum standards 20.3)

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: SC009423

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Qari Yakub Nanji

Type of school: Boarding school

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Inspectors

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